

# LUMEN VITAE

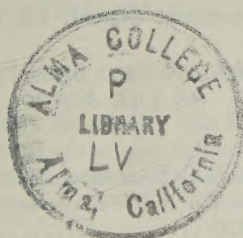
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## EDITORIAL

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*Weakened by the recent divisions which brought their citizens into conflict, States are now anxious to reinforce national unity, whilst mankind wearied by fratricidal wars, longs for peace and harmony. To attain this, neither mankind, nor individual nations rely on legislative measures which do not urge improvement in the conscience of men. No human truly society can exist without union of thoughts and ideals. Hence the leading role of education which transmits a tradition, links up the members of the rising generation with its predecessors and, at the same time, unites them closely to each other. Here, in particular, lies the importance of the school. No doubt, the bringing-up of the young is not exclusively the work of the school. But experience precludes us from belittling its mission. Nowadays we no longer think in terms of a school whose only aim would be to instruct without educating, to analyse ideas and not present values. Thus, a first problem arises as much for the nation as for humanity: "What spiritual patrimony will the School transmit to the young citizen of a State, to all its youth?" Scarcely has a general agreement been reached on a few indispensable values, than some people are tempted to transform this minimum into a maximum. If concord is ephemeral without a minimum of shared convictions, is there no risk, they ask, of this union being compromised by the personal opinions or values an individual might add? And so, the first problem gives rise to a second one: "Will the School be allowed to draw up the inventory of the inheritance appertaining to the various spiritual families, and above all will it be allowed to seek in one particular tradition the firm principle of unity of all teaching and all education? This problem is complex, as if it is primarily concerned with the spirit of the schools, it also relates to their status, the spirit being only fully safeguarded in an institution adapted to it."*

*If we concentrate our attention on religious values, and more especially on Christian values, the two problems take shape and become of even greater interest to us. Western culture derives a great deal*

from Christianity. Without mentioning religious life, the most precious human values of Western culture — notably the harmonious synthesis of personalism and sense of community — have been affirmed and maintained only in a Christian climate. Consequently, we discover one of the chief aspects of the first problem: “Can the School, having the task to transmit a common spiritual patrimony, make abstraction of religion and, in particular, of Christianity? Can it, without failing in its mission, inculcate a secularism opposed to the normal diffusion of religion or, worse still, revert to pre-Christian times and seek its inspiration in the cult of the instinct and materialism?”

Such a problem interests all who, in Europe, in the Americas, or elsewhere, lay claim to Western civilization. But, laying aside certain special characteristics, it concerns equally Eastern Europe, the Russian people, “that mystic child, now being brought up under the rod of a technician,” the Asiatic and African peoples whose culture, so profoundly religious, awaits its completion in Christianity. The reader will find proof of this universal interest in the nationalities and the residences of the authors of these articles. We are especially happy to produce an account by a distinguished citizen of the new India (**Jerome G. D’Souza**) and a seminarist of Negro Africa (**Gérard Mwerekande**).

As for the second problem, it also takes the following shape: “Will the Educational System of a country be adapted to the religious situation of the nation? Will respect for freedom limit itself to the absence of all constraint in matters of religion, or will it go on to foster the balanced development of personality in accordance with a freely chosen religious orientation, if not by the child, at least by those primarily responsible for its education?” To-day, those men anxious concerning the religious future of mankind react energetically against the secularising idea which has prevailed; the majority hope that the whole cultural formation will be animated by the religion which the child practises, and by not a vague deism. These anxieties and wishes are shared throughout the various Christian denominations. If the majority of authors writing in this issue are Roman Catholics, some are distinguished members of other denominations. The review is especially grateful to **Father Alexis Kniazeff** and **Father Victor Yourieff**, archpriests of the Orthodox Church; to the **Rt. Rev. Dr William Greer**, Bishop of Manchester and the **Rt. Rev. Dr Walter Carey**, at one time Bishop of Bloemfontein, both of the Church of England; to the **Rev. John Davis McCaughey** of the presbyterian Church of Ireland.

If the two problems which concern us at the moment do not leave



indifferent those who possess a sense of religion, or even merely a considered esteem for the great human values, they also present themselves to the various States and certain International Institutions. The State, keeper of the common good, must normally be concerned with the education of its citizens. Nowadays, in this sphere, its role has become more important following the development and the specialization in teaching. On the other hand, secularization and — it must be admitted — the divisions among Christians, which removed from Christian Education its interior principle of unity, or, at least, weakened it, have made the recourse to outside principles of unity, more frequent and even excessive. In this way, the State was induced to interfere more than ever in the existing framework; it exerted its influence especially on the schools it set up. It is a propos of these that the problems envisaged present themselves in all their acuteness (**State Schools and Christian Formation**).

By « State Schools » we understand elementary, secondary and higher schools which the State has built or, by a legitimate extension, those which subsidiary public authorities, county and borough, have established. In some countries, these schools are secular and neutral — all religious instruction being prohibited. In others, they are, at least to a certain extent, confessional. A first series of articles tells us of the atmosphere of entirely secular schools, of that of secular schools in which a course of religion is given, and lastly, of that of State denominational schools (**First section : The present milieu of State Schools**).

The present state of affairs gives rise to criticisms, both from the point of view of religion and from that of the national and human community; certain wishes are expressed and plans worked out by international organizations such as UNESCO, or by educators and jurists of various countries. Competent authors inform us on the subject of UNESCO (**Paul De Visscher**); and various European countries: France (**Pierre-Henri Simon**), Great Britain (**J. Davis McCaughey**), Germany (**Paul Westhoff**); the United States (**Edward B. Rooney**), India (**Jerome G. D'Souza**), Japan (**Joseph Roggendorf**), Africa (**Joseph Van Wing, Gérard Mwerekande**). This second section (**Recent Projects and Debates on the subject of the School**) completes the sociological study of the State School, adding to the description given by the first section, the suggestions inspired by the desire for progress.

However important the considerations relative to the influence of the School on the human and religious development of the young,



they cannot distract us from the other aspects of religious formation which must be assured to the pupils of State Schools, and particularly neutral and secular schools. These considerations can, on the other hand, help us to state precisely the particular exigencies which this formation must fulfill. And so, taking these indications into account, **Mr Jean Guitton, Canon Jacques Leclercq, Mr l'Abbé Delbecq** tell us what must be the spirit and the aims of this course of religious instruction. On the one hand, the teaching of secular matters cannot leave out the role of religion, more particularly of Christianity, in the development of the human race (**Christopher Dawson**); moreover in the State denominational schools, the whole course of tuition will find its completion in the light of Christianity (**Charles Moeller**).

The volume ends with the account of certain helpful achievements; in the Church of England (**Rt. Rev. Dr. William Greer**), in the Orthodox Church (**Victor Yourieff**), and in the Roman Catholic Church (**Albert Lanquetin, Josef Haefner, Heinrich Suso Braun, Heinrich Jansen Cron**).

The Review wishes to thank all those through whose collaboration this number has been achieved; offering it to readers and friends with the hope of benefitting by their comments.

We had advised our subscribers that each of four issues would, this year, have 160 pages. It has seemed advisable not to separate the matter of this particular number of our Review, nor of the coming one which will entirely devoted to the Catechism and will be about 240 pages in length. These two first issues containing more than the matter forecast for three numbers, the second issue will be indexed 2-3, and will be published on June 15th.

For our next issue entirely devoted to the Catechism (lessons and textbooks), the Review has obtained the collaboration of:

His Grace the Most Rev. Mgr **Garrone** (France), **Franz Arnold** (Germany), **W. Bless** (Holland), **G. de Bretagne** (Canada), **Y. Daniel** (France), **F. Derkenne** (France), **F. H. Drinkwater** (England), **M. Fargues** (France), **G. Gathelier** (France), **J. Hofinger** (Philippines), **John E. Kelly** (U. S. A.), **Jos. A. Jungmann** (Austria), **A. Lanquetin** (France), **J. Pihan** (France), **L. Raillon** (France), **L. Rétif** (France), **K. Tilmann** (Germany), **F. M. Willam** (Austria)...

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PART I

# THE STATE SCHOOLS

# The Secularising Influence of the Neutral Official Schools

## REPORTS FROM

Albert LANQUETIN (France), Benoît VANRAEPENBUSCH (Belgium), Edward BEAUDUIN (Belgium), Adèle DE LONEUX (Belgium), Joaquín R. FERNÁNDEZ (Bolivia), José E. PIESCHACÓN, Juan Manuel PACHECO and Salvador CANCELADO (Columbia), John C. REID and Michael K. JOSEPH (New Zealand)

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The contributions which we are publishing are from masters and mistresses with a knowledge of the pupils in official neutral schools. Teachers of profane subjects or of religion, curates entrusted with teaching the catechism, chaplains to some family organisation, they tell us of the experience which has often been theirs and that of their colleagues. If they decry the dangers of the milieu, they also tell of the advantages, and do not try to make the school alone responsible for influences which are also the work of the society in which it exists.

These representative witnesses are drawn from both primary and secondary schools. They come to us from France, England,<sup>1</sup> Belgium, various countries of South America, and Australia. Their contributions, however, do not form a world-wide documentation. The second section will complete the information — at least as presuppositions — for the countries of Europe: France, England, Germany, the United States, the countries of Asia, India and Japan, and for Africa. It will also confirm the realistic answers although few in number that we are to quote. Although not numerous enough to form general conclusions, they are sufficient for us

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<sup>1</sup> We published in our last last number (IV-1949, n° 4) the reply of the Rev. Sebastian REDMOND, chaplain to the Catholic students at Nottingham. We shall not reproduce it in this place.



to understand some of the situations which are common to all and are of great importance' morally.

The state of affairs is not the same everywhere ; but a comparison of the documents reveals there is a general prevailing tendency in all neutral teaching.

## I. FRANCE AND BELGIUM

First, a witness from France. It is the Reverend Albert LANQUETIN, chaplain general to the Rural Family Movement. He knows the country children very well ; he has adapted for their use the *Vivre en chrétien* by the Rev. Y. DANIEL, and has composed a pre-catechism for them. In the following passage he describes for us the effect of official neutral teaching on the *country child*.

It is known that in so-called "lay" schools, the teaching is either anti-religious or mutilated and dessicated by an entirely negative neutrality which completely eliminates the highest spiritual values.

Occasionally the education is steeped in certain conscious rationalism which partially sterilizes the germs of Faith deposited in the children's souls by baptism and by the work of Christian formation undertaken outside the school.

In country districts, that vague perception of the mystery of Creation and dependance on the Creator which ordinarily resides in the minds of the people, runs the risk of being very blunted by a teaching which claims (or seems to claim) to explain everything, without distinguishing the various spheres of knowledge, starting from elementary scientific facts. The pupils get, at least vaguely, the impression that it is possible to understand everything without the principles of religion, — and to lead a good life without any light or help from Heaven. God is absent. The world goes on without Him. Apparently, history has developed without Him. One can live without Him. For the child brought up in this manner God will be a stranger.

Moreover, the primary school programme, as is inevitable in our modern civilization, becomes more and more directed towards technical and utilitarian training. And there is nothing more de-spiritualizing than this utilitarianism which subordinates everything to economic values. It results in a practical materialism. Is not this, after all, the root cause of contemporary dechristianisation ?

Further, this rationalism and materialism become much more virulent in the « New Schools » which are dependent on the Education Authorities, and this, it would seem, by very reason of the methods used ; but what is to be said when the teachers of these schools are professed atheistic materialists and...organised? It is announced that a thousand or so of these "New" classes will be opening this year in France. But experiments have already been carried in various places, even in the country areas.

We give the evidence of a rural catechist, who cannot be suspected of any a priori hostility to the method, as she herself uses the active methods.

"I had seen the film 'L'École buissonnière' and had admired its effectiveness, considering it from the human point of view.

In a village in our area (a de-christianised area), I was able to make direct contact with a 'New School' and its didactic equipment — printing press, etc... The schoolmaster very willingly discussed his pedagogy.

Discipline is easy. The children concerned restore order themselves among those who disturb them in their work. Not only do they not just endure class, but they love it and very often come back of their own accord on Thursday (half-holiday) to continue some work they have begun.

The schoolmaster said: "I am a sort of Father Christmas to my children." Often the parents and young people spend their evenings at his home and his influence is enormous. The success of the children at the school-leaving exam (they all pass) has of course helped to increase this influence.

I saw the school programme: month by month.

The first month — Harvesting (starting with prehistoric man and the work in the fields; we are in October). There follows: cultivation, handicrafts, industry, the relationship of man with the entire world, — with the elements, with the invisible world (chance, religion, superstition are all mixed together).

After my visit to the school, I saw the children at the Catechism class.

Previously, I had glanced through their school-books and been struck by the composition: it was clear and precise, written and spelt in a way I had rarely seen in a rural school district. But with no trace of religious consciousness; the creation is indeed described but they do not go back to the Creator.

I was present at the lesson. The little girls are very receptive and far from being passive.

"Sister, I don't understand how God could know us before we were born."

"I don't understand." The attitude of a child withdrawing itself.

The lesson is sprinkled with similar remarks from others of the pupils.

These children recite a whole page intelligently. Not by rote. The expressions used are correct and individual; but they recite their lesson as one does a fairy tale. They have self assurance and an easy diction.

These children are not lacking in knowledge but they have not got the Faith. They only believe what they understand. They are closed to mystery. And in them there is a barrier to Faith... or rather their minds are not on the same wavelength as that of believers.

Without any hostility — they are very nice to the Sisters — they are opposed to their teaching. The occasion arising, they would in the same way be opposed to some family teaching.

"The children of the 'New Schools' will be of a strength to restore the trend of family life," their schoolmaster said one day.

They certainly give that impression.

The new (secular) methods operate of themselves. Even in those schools

where the master is by no means a sectarian, he has a positivist mind and that is enough..."

Let us note, however, that the pupils of these schools will be far less obtuse scientifically than those of the traditional primary schools : by discovering for themselves truths, however humble, they guess something of the immense complexity of the Universe and in this way may find themselves forarmed against the conceited folly of Mr. Homais.

But one must see that, through lack of placing the idea of God at the origin of the child's search for knowledge, the official formula uses all the powers of the active methods to keep the younger generations more surely removed from all metaphysical conceptions, and in the lower regions of utilitarian empiricism, their faculties for abstract reasoning being only exercised in mathematics and in a no less utilitarian manner.

Doubtless, this threat will only become general after a number of years, but do we not want to foresee and plan the future, rather than find fault with a present which each day becomes a dead and finished past.

To sum up, rationalism, atheism, utilitarianism and practical materialism, more or less gravely distort the minds of those of our children who are also pupils of secular schools, and render them in various degrees impervious to the truths of religion.

Must we despair ? No, for child's mind, above all that of the baptised child, has resources on which the religious teacher may count. But he must not let these faculties lie dormant. There is fortunately another side to the gloomy picture which we have just seen.

The child's instinct and, no doubt also, the grace which resides in and solicits his heart, make him a friend of mystery. If it is presented to him in simple and affective terms, the supernatural finds in him a secret response. More than any other, the country child living in contact with the wonders of nature, longs to believe in God and in the works of God among men.

The profoundest instincts of a child feel frustrated by the rationalist and utilitarian upbringing of the godless school. Some of them cannot endure it and — openly or secretly — revolt against the mutilation which this formation tries to inflict on them. The majority, if not all, will eventually blossom out in a more vivifying educative atmosphere if it is given them. A good Catechism class which goes to the heart as well as to the mind and in which even the poetry of the Bible and of the Liturgy has its place, can give rise to and regulate such reactions (while avoiding, of course, setting the child against the schoolmaster, or even against the school).

On the other hand, the fighting spirit of a child of 12, or more, — especially of a boy — will be aroused by the struggle needed to go against the trend of the school. He will be capable of criticising the influence of the environment and even, at times, the teaching of the master himself. Finally, it will



be found easier to develop the apostolic sense in him than in a pupil of a Christian school. (Is it necessary to emphasise that this fighting spirit is a propensity which has to be purified, and that the apostolate, even for the youngest of Christians is not an affair of moral constraint or even of proselytism ?).

All things considered, and experience amply demonstrates it every day, there is a chance of forming a more vigorous Christian elite with the scholars of the secular school than with those of a Christian school of average worth.

Further, the immense mass of children who do not frequent our schools must not be neglected under the pretence that on the whole their perseverance appears to be very improbable. Simply by endeavouring to give satisfaction to the obscure craving for religion of the majority at an age when individual personality develops, it is possible, without knowing it, and even against all outward appearances, to prepare way for the dawn of a great Christian renaissance, or, at least, to put a considerable check on the process of dechristianization from which so many districts are now suffering. The elite, in any case, can only arise from the good work put into the mass.

We now pass from the French countryside to a densely-populated part of Brussels. What do the children here think of religion ? Whence do they derive their opinions and prejudices ? The Reverend VANRAEPENBUSCH is the very man to tell us. He is curate of SS. John and Stephen at the Minimes and for the last few years has taught the catechism to the little "Maroliens."

I would like to give the results of my experience necessarily restricted to the Brussels area. I will try and describe the religious ideas of children whose parents are not Christian and very indifferent to religion ; I can only speak of the children whom I have seen and heard, but I do not think I am mistaken in saying that in our capital the children of non-religious parents have, generally speaking, the same religious notions in all parts of Brussels. These parents and children belong mainly to the lower classes. You have them in every parish. We call them "the masses," that class of people who are mass-minded, have no personal convictions, and if they do have the same opinions and the same mental reactions, it is not because any personal seeking after truth has brought them all together. They have the same ideas, simply because they have swallowed the slogans, prejudices and gossip of their surroundings.

We cannot learn the character and personality of the child as such. He is influenced by his family, district and school.

We must understand the school mentality. Even if a strict neutrality is kept, the child will gain the impression that these important people, the teachers, have no need of religion in their lives and when forming a judgment they do not take religious teaching into account. I always surprise the children when I tell them that their teachers may be Christians, and they reply : " Why then don't they show it ? "

Rarely does the teaching in schools attack religion openly.

But in the Government schools much stress is put upon "Science" and the discoveries of science. It is the conception of Auguste Comte. He lived in the 19th century. The children are told a great deal about Darwinism, prehistoric man, pre-Adamite (Adam's skeleton has been found and the civil status of his ancestors established !) It is interesting to note that pseudoscientific ideas current among intellectuals at any particular period do not reach the masses until fifty years later. They are now positivist. Perhaps in the year 2000 they will all be existentialist followers of Sartre.

Religion is not openly attacked, but the presentation of pseudo-scientific theories contradicts our dogmas. Science with a big S or the Scientists also with a big S ("Why" said a child to me after I had poked fun at the certitude and omniscience of savants, "Why then do they write scientist with a capital S if they don't know everything?"), the scientists will say, for instance that we (they make no distinction between soul and body) fall into dust and return to the great universe of matter, and this matter evolves and will always evolve.

"There will be no end of the world. The mistress said in class that it will always go on." And thus is eliminated from the child's mind the dogma of the resurrection of the flesh and of general judgment.

And if the child protests that the catechism teaches the contrary, "Yes, I said that at the end of the world, there will be the resurrection. All the class laughed at me; the teacher did not laugh, then she said she was not concerned with what the religion taught, but that having studied science, she knew that..."

"Yes, you say that, Father, but teacher was studying science while you were learning how to say your prayers."

Even if the school instruction does conform with dogma; it is always true that it does not concern itself with harmonising Faith and science and solving the difficulties with which the children meet.

"The world was not created by God because it came from the sun. You say that God, the angels and the saints are in Heaven. But in class they tell us that there are only stars, planets and ether in heaven."

It would have been so simple, if education did not have to be neutral, to distinguish between the astronomical heaven and that of beatific vision.

Unless he is a precocious genius, the child is incapable of resisting the errors which surround him; he receives them and adopts them.

This deep rift caused in the child's soul by the division between two teachings which appear to contradict one another, has already been noticed by the Reverend Father LANQUETIN in the country districts.

M. VANRAEPENBUSCH recalls to our mind that in order to understand the child, one must also be familiar with his family, the district where he lives, his school. The Rev. Edward BEAUDUIN

professor of religion at the Athénée<sup>2</sup> of Liège, begins by putting us on our guard against limiting our field of observation unduly. We are free to explore the milieu of the schools; we must not however neglect the other surroundings in which our adolescents are growing up.

Serious misunderstandings may arise when trying to judge the influence of State schools as a "milieu" in the religious training of pupils, unless one first takes care to know precisely what is meant by milieu.

The public secondary school is only one of several milieux in which the child lives, and these others are more influential than the school. The family setting is of first importance; as the character of the school is neutral and rather vague, the character of the home will be a decisive element in the behaviour of the child at school. In a State school more than anywhere else one can see the strong impression made by a good sound Christian family on any particular youth. Along with the home, other milieux exercise an important and decisive influence, for example the parish and any special educational milieu such as the Scout movement. It would then be quite a mistake to talk of the milieu factor in a public secondary school without taking into account the concrete circumstances in which a boy is placed and which contribute to his intellectual, moral and religious development.

After having explored all the surroundings of our pupils' lives and recognised — at least, generally speaking — the various influences which they exert, we may now without inconvenience study the school milieu, to discover its chief characteristics.

Upon these primary milieux the secondary school takes the boy in his specifically student activities. What are the effects of this new setting upon his religious formation? Two things should be noted. On the one hand, there is practically no firm setting. In such school the boys are together only during school hours or for very brief recreations, and apart from the requirements of the time-table, of discipline and study, there is nothing to make a deep impression on a boy's moral conduct, which is what we are here concerned with. On the other hand, the freedom of philosophical, moral and religious opinions which is a characteristic of these schools puts the boy, at an age when he is beginning to reason things out, in confrontation with views of life that are alien to the Christian view. He learns them from talks with other boys or from their very behaviour, or again it may be from certain of his masters. These views range from atheism and irreligion to all kinds of lay morality or a so-called religious morality. Hence he acquires a tendency to hear opinions, to read anything, to take up freely any problems and solutions presented to him.

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<sup>2</sup> *Athénée* is the name given in Belgium to the official secondary schools which teach the humanities. It corresponds to the French *lycée*.



Having got to know better the atmosphere, we may now, without any risk of being too precipitate, study the question of its effect on youth, taking other elements into account : personal talents, family training....

What emerges out of all this for the moral and religious formation of the human person ?

For boys with a strong character and those coming from good homes the absence of a firm clear setting at school cannot have any great influence either one way or the other. The same cannot be said of the vast majority who come from homes deficient in this respect or of boys of average ability. For these latter the influence of the secondary school is rather negative, by which I mean that these youths need special helps in order to keep up to any spiritual standards. They will have no power to react against the easy-going, pleasure-seeking, materialist mentality of the present day and with which they are themselves imbued.

With such pupils the teacher is up against a great indifference — not to say imperviousness — with regard to spiritual and religious matters. This difficulty is more marked in the departments of practical studies such as the modern and commercial sides ; these are unsuited to arouse in the mind any interest for spiritual problems.

There is the second point to consider : the increasing freedom to come in contact with the most diverse opinions and to learn and read anything at all. Here it depends on the boy's power of assimilation. The less bright boy either gets nothing out of it or else he is attracted by an easier morality, and yet this attraction is sometimes neutralised by an inborn latent sense of religious fear. With stronger characters this meeting with non-Christian views can be most profitable. The teacher of religion should make use of this freedom which the pupil possesses in order to deepen his moral and religious convictions ; he should use all these branches of human knowledge to raise the boy's mind to an understanding of the Christian mystery and lay the foundations of a strong Christian personality. Judging from experience, we may truly say that when you have achieved such a result in boys above the average, the certainty of faith is more solidly rooted in the soul and religious defections in later life are rare.

To conclude : the problem of the milieu in a public secondary school is a complex one, but it is of great importance for sound religious teaching. From a pedagogical point of view religious teaching is essential, and it is desirable that those responsible for drawing up the curriculum should give more thought to it.

Before leaving Belgium, let us consult a highly qualified teacher : Miss Adèle DE LONEUX, for a long time teacher in a official training school.

The pupils even those practising their faith, are far from being religious-minded.

I have known an intelligent young girl of eighteen who went to Communion every Sunday with her mother and would not miss going. But she did not believe in a spiritual and immortal soul and did not feel the inconsistency ! " They are totally different spheres " she would explain.

If the pupil in a government school has not had supplementary religious training outside school, he will take years to shake off the rationalism he has imbibed during the impressionable years of childhood and early youth. In addition, all the activities and organisations recommended to the pupils are non-religious and, in any case, anti-denominational.

The pupil who for his professional or general training has to pass from one institution to another, is necessarily directed only to government schools run on the same neutral lines.

How can he ever have the chance of discovering that other points of view exist ?

Briefly, the attitude of the teaching body is usually unfavourable to religion. But, in a school the influence of the pupils on one another is nearly as strong as that of the masters ; very often it counteracts it.

We will speak later of the influence of the religious course where it exists. A word remains to be said of the fellow students.

These contacts may be the occasion of much harm ; it is the danger of what is called " mixing " in government schools. But it may also cause much good. There do exist, here and there, among the pupils, some veritable apostles. But they are not numerous.

MISS DE LONEUX, like the previous writers, sees a predominant tendency towards rationalism in the neutral official schools ; she also appreciates the high quality of religion in an élite, usually sustained by some out of school agency ; she also shows us the interior struggle to which the majority succumb. Her conclusion thus agrees with that of Rev. A. BEAUDUIN.

I have seen a few children find the Faith in a government school under the influence of their companions ; I have seen religious vocations come to light. I have also seen some whose faith has triumphed over the depressing atmosphere of " neutrality " throughout the years, and who have turned into magnificent Catholics capable of exerting a deep influence on those around them. But such as these have almost always some points of contact outside the school.

As for the " old boys " from government schools whom I have met, those who are interested in religious problems bring to them a freshness, a sincerity, a broadmindedness which one does not always meet with elsewhere. They usually go straight to the point, without being deflected by side issues and the irrelevancies and details which so often encumber us.

Many stop on the way. Why is this ?

The three words which sum up their difficulties and their often insuperable incomprehension are faith, sacrifice, apostolate.

Even fervent believers are often far from understanding the conquering spirit of Christianity : Help others to be happy ? Oh, yes, certainly ! — To be better ? — Doubtless ! — To be Christians ? — Why ? To each man his own opinion, his liberty !

It is easy to see the origin of this mistake !

From these short notes one can conclude what are the great difficulties in the way of a Catholic training, if not *through* the government school, at least *at* it, sometimes *in spite* of it.

For the great majority of children, attendance at the government school is dangerous under present circumstances. If it is unavoidable that many Catholic children have to go to them, then the parents are under the very grave obligation of demanding more extra-school hours classes where religious teaching can be guaranteed, and of seeing that the children attend them regularly. The organisation and expansion of these training groups is one of the most urgent tasks of the day.

## II. BOLIVIA AND COLUMBIA

In South America the position differs in the various countries. In Mexico, the secular school is often antireligious ; in Uruguay, culture is under the influence of rationalists. In certain countries : Paraguay, Cuba... religion is not taught in the schools ; elsewhere, it is so only if there are sufficient teachers qualified to give the instructions. After sixty years of laicism, Argentina has reestablished religious tuition, and so has Bolivia.

Of the communications which we have received from South America, we give extracts from two typical ones : the first — from Bolivia — informs us of the recent development in Argentina and Bolivia ; the other — from Columbia — tells of a country in which Catholic influence has been exercised for a long time in the school.<sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of the century, a secularising movement in Bolivia substituted a purely natural basis of morality for a religious one. An official work thus commented on the programme of the training school of Sucre : "The pupils must be instructed in their duty to themselves, their neighbours, family and country, by analysing and placing before them noble examples

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<sup>3</sup> We may remind the reader of an article dealing with the religious situation in Chili which appeared in our pages over the signature of Rev. Fr. HURTADO (see *Lumen Vitae*, III (1948), pp. 41-64).



taken from history, literature and daily life. Through psychology the pupils will learn to make good use of their faculties and will acquire a new outlook on the motives of their acts, their minds, on welfare, liberty, responsibility, right, duty, merit and demerit, virtue and the sanctions of the moral law. They will be shown the evolution of the moral ideal and of religions, so as to make them understand that the aspiration for wellbeing is of all ages and places and is independent of religious belief." (*La Reforma Educacional en Bolivia* — Edición oficial, La Paz, 1917).

Thus trained, the teachers became propagandists of a secularism which was already abroad in the scholastic world. University professors lent themselves to the promotion of secularism.

As a consequence, public education trained the pupils in rationalism. The better children were easily drawn to harmful reading and exposed to propaganda in favour of indifference or liberal doctrines.

The decrees of 10th January 1942, 7th March 1947 and 19th April 1949 are victories over secularism. In the future, religion and morality must be taught as ordinary subjects of the curriculum in all schools, whether public or private.

It is too soon to give statistics as to attendance at these religious courses. However, one may state that almost all the pupils go to them in the colleges and public schools where they are given.

This situation, new in Bolivia, has obtained for a long time in *Columbia*.

Fr. José E. PIESCHACÓN, president of the Federation of Catholic Colleges, and Fr. Juan Manuel PACHECO, of the *Revista Javeriana* write to this effect :

In Columbia, religious instruction is obligatory in the primary and secondary schools and the universities. The course must be given in every class twice a week and all the pupils must attend. This obligation dates from the Concordat drawn up between the Holy See and the Columbian government in 1887. Article 12 runs as follows : "In universities and colleges, in the schools and other educational establishments, education and public instruction will be organised in conformity with the dogmas and morality of Catholic religion. Religious teaching will be obligatory in these centres."

Article 41 of the present Constitution of the Republic ordains : "Public education will be organised and directed in concordance with the Catholic religion." This article was departed from after the constitutional reform of 1936, carried out by a Congress all of whose members belonged to the so-called liberal party. Today the government in power is resolved to "defend the inviolable right of parents to educate their children in the Christian manner, against government monopoly and laicisation."

Hence public education is Christian in its tendency and the children's mentality is not imbued with rationalism. However,

this danger shows itself at the national University of Bogota and the University del Cauca at Popaya, where some of the professors are marxist. Some of the professors at the training schools are also ill disposed towards religion. With these exceptions, the professorial body does not teach anything against beliefs.

The position, however, is not an ideal one. The religious training of the instructors is usually deficient, and their influence on the pupils' education is poor. Of late years, professors with sympathetic leanings towards communism have found their way into the government colleges; their effect is however neutralised by the appointment of Catholic teachers, the majority of whom come from private training schools.

These failings have not escaped the notice of those who watch over the religious training of youth. The Rev. CANCELADO, director of religious instruction in the archdiocese of Bogota, writes to us at this point :

Efforts are being multiplied to ensure that the training of the pupils shall be deeply Christian; to attain this, religious teaching has been intensified and the training in religion and morality for the teachers and professors has been improved.

### III. NEW ZEALAND

At the beginning of this article we referred to the study of the non-Catholic English university written by Fr. Sebastian REDMOND. Here we have the views of a New Zealand professor. Mr John REID is professor of English literature at Auckland University. He starts by contradicting the assertions of ill-informed Catholics. He considers that open attacks on religion are rare, that the evil is underground and not felt openly, but that the effects upon men's minds are none the less real for that.

Can we see behind the incomplete and imperfect University system of New Zealand any consistent philosophy, which may be absorbed consciously or unconsciously? Many citizens, noting the radicalism of the more vociferous students, believe that 'communism' (that convenient generic term) is the 'philosophy' of the University, that nearly all the staff are Communists. Especially, I have noted, among uneducated Catholics, there prevails the naïve conception of the University as a hot-bed of Marxism, where Communism is actively preached and indulged in during nameless intellectual debauches.

In actual fact, an occasional professor or lecturer may be a Communist, a few others may lean to Marxism; but even these do not consciously use their

position to propagate their ideas in the lecture room. There is, I believe, a very high sense of responsibility in this direction among the University staffs in this country. Of course, the detecting of the line between fact and opinion might, I am well aware, be a delicate matter in some instances, but it is safe to say that the integrity of University teachers in New Zealand is something to be admired.

There is, however, I believe, a philosophy in the New Zealand University, one which pervades all secularist thought today ; it is a state of mind, really, which directs the work of many lecturers and professors, and which cannot but have its effect upon the students.

This philosophy is *positivism, the current disorder which lies at the basis of modern education*. Dr. Mortimer J. Adler has anatomized it very ably in 'What Man has Made of Man' and 'God and the Professors.' The positivists do not recognise science, philosophy and religion as distinct bodies of knowledge, different as to methods of knowing as well as with respect to objects known. They hold the idea that philosophy is not public knowledge ; but merely opinion. Their essential doctrine is the affirmation of the truth of the positive sciences and complete agnosticism on matters of religion and philosophy. Science and the scientific method represent, in the field of economics, sociology, education, chemistry, etc., the only true knowledge. Religion is one aspect only of culture, one with many human occupations, of indifferent importance along with art, history and philosophy. There are enough kinds of positivism, but behind the multiplicity of jargons there is a common philosophy. This is simply the affirmation of the scientific method, and the denial of philosophy and religion. In its modern form, this view combines positivism and naturalism.

I do not claim that these ideas are held consciously by a majority in the staffs of the New Zealand University, but a great number hold them implicitly, and many, without a very clear idea of the basis of their opinions, accept the prevailing academic atmosphere as natural. Some Colleges appear to be more militantly positivist than others — perhaps Victoria College is the most obvious case.

Now, if the ordinary student finds adjustment to University life difficult in the social and academic spheres, how much more must the Catholic student ? Even if he is only chasing a professional qualification, he can hardly escape carrying off certain assumptions as part of his unconscious equipment. He will be taught by men whom he will naturally regard as being authorities in their subject, men who will do their very best to exclude their private opinions, but who will at times, unconsciously, both by their ignoring of Christian values and by their emphases elsewhere, tend to encourage a viewpoint implicitly hostile to Christianity.

Thus there is, I believe, a basic necessity (1) for a Catholic University student to be thoroughly well grounded in philosophy and dialectics, as well as in the practice of his Faith (2) for his knowledge of his Faith to grow in pace with his knowledge of secular subjects and (3) for his mind as a Catholic to mature as his knowledge of men and things matures.



With this our quotations come to an end. It is too early to draw hard and fast conclusions. But we may be allowed some surmises.

Several correspondents have made the point that attendance at an official neutral school has been, for an élite helped from outside, the occasion and even the means of spiritual enrichment: boys and girls have left these schools with their minds broadened, their characters tested, and their souls more spontaneously devoted to God.

These consoling thoughts cannot however conceal from us that the effects are very different for the majority of the pupils. Breathing the secularised atmosphere of modern culture, the neutral official school has to a greater or less extent contributed to the spread of rationalism and therefore to render children impervious to mystery or to give them divided minds.

Happily, secularism, vigorously defended by its partisans, is losing ground in several countries. The harm that it has done has been observed, and from this knowledge has sprung action which has here and there resulted in a reform of the institutions.

On the contrary, Christianity, and Catholicism in particular, has regained favour or, at least, attacks on it have ceased in places where it used to be accused of obscurantism. We heard a professor of literature in Auckland university denouncing the secularism latent in the New Zealand University; one of his colleagues, professor Michael K. JOSEPH, reveals signs of a change in this respect:

The intellectual position at present is very favourable to Catholics — and speaking of Catholics here, we can perhaps claim as allies those who are ‘with us but not one of us’... The novels of Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Mauriac, the poetry of Eliot, Edith Sitwell and Claudel — these establish Catholic literature on the very peaks.

Behind all this there lies a whole development of scholarship which, in a general way, favours the Catholic view, and which, in the main, has developed simply out of research, without any thought of religious implications. I will mention only two important instances. The first is the problem of the Renaissance. The standard nineteenth-century view... supposed a ‘break between the Mediaeval and the Renaissance periods; the Renaissance was a new beginning, literally a ‘new birth.’ That artificial distinction has now broken down, and a vast body of research has been devoted to showing that in fact it does not exist — that either the Renaissance begins well back in the Middle Ages, or the Middle Ages survive well into the Renaissance... By understanding that continuity we are forced to see that the culture of the Western world is rooted in the Catholic culture of mediaeval Europe.

The second example is that other ‘problem child’ of literary history, the Romantic movement. Once upon a time we were taught: ‘Eighteenth

century — age of prose and reason — French Revolution — “bliss was it in that dawn to be alive” — *Lyrical Ballads* 1798 — Romantic poets.’ Again, we have been forced to recognize that there are no breaks, always a continuum, and that the Romantic movement was in many ways not a revolution but a reaction. Or rather, it was an attempted reaction, an attempted return to a religious view of life, which in the circumstances almost inevitably went astray, and found its true direction at last only in Newman. The Romantics were, as Mauriac calls them, ‘the corrupt children of Christ.’

These revaluations are very far-reaching, and include a host of revaluations of individual Catholics — St. Thomas More, Edmund Campion, Racine, Pope, Newman, Baudelaire, Bloy, Hopkins, and others. They all tend to favour a Catholic view of art and history.

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# Secular Schools and Russian Youth

by Alexis KNIAZEFF

*Professor at the Orthodox Institute of Theology in Paris,  
Chaplain to the Christian Movement of Russian Students*<sup>1</sup>

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In the last generation or two, nations formerly traditionally attached to church schools have undergone the experience of compulsory secular ones. The Russian experiment in this respect is especially significant. The people were deeply religious and strongly conservative in their faith. At the beginning of the century the intellectual élite of the country returned to God ; there was a religious revival during the years which followed the revolution of October 1917. Since then, freedom of education has been suppressed and every form of religious education forbidden.

As for the emigrant Russian youth, they have for the most part entered the government schools of the States where they have grown up. Nearly all these have been secular schools.<sup>2</sup>

After thirty years of experience, certain facts which have been gathered as to the education of youth in Russia and in exile may be set down.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Alexis KNIAZEFF was born at Baku in 1913. He attended the lycée of that town until 1923. He then left Russia. On coming to France, he entered the lycée at Nice, then the Pasteur lycée at Neuilly-sur-Seine. From 1932 to 1935 he attended the course in the Faculty of Law at Paris ; from 1935 to 1938 he worked as an assurance agent. He next studied at the Orthodox Institute of Theology at Paris (1938-43). In 1944 he became a professor of Sacred Scripture. In 1947 he was ordained priest and nominated as chaplain of the Christian Movement of Russian Students. — Address : 168, rue de Saint-Gratien, Ermont, Seine-et-Oise, FRANCE. (Editor's note).

<sup>2</sup> The Orthodox emigrés founded several private schools. In France, Russian secondary school (Boulogne, Seine), School for Russian cadets (Versailles), Institution for girls (Quincy-sous-Sénart, Seine-et-Oise), Boardingschool (Verrières-le-Buisson), M. Yakoutoff's school (Nice). In Yugoslavia, Cadet school (Belgrade). In Czechoslovakia, secondary school (Maravska-Trebova) ; other schools were opened at Kharbin and Shanghai. The only schools now existing are those at Boulogne and Versailles.



## I. INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOLS SYSTEM ON YOUTH IN RUSSIA

After 1917, under the rule of the Soviets only science was allowed to occupy men's minds. Education came under its sway. Article 9 of the decree of the Commissaries of the People, dated 23 January, 1918, proclaimed: "The school is separate from the Church. The teaching of religious doctrines is not allowed either in the State schools, nor collective schools, nor in private schools in which lessons of general culture are given. Citizens may teach and learn religion privately." <sup>3</sup> A later circular authorised parents to get a person from outside to come and give lessons in religion to groups of three children at the most. This was rescinded by the law of 8th April 1920 which laid down: "Concerning the teaching of religion to minors (under 18), this may only be given by the parents." <sup>4</sup> Finally, the new Constitution of Stalin, 5th December 1936, in article 124 states: "In order to guarantee liberty of conscience to all citizens, the Church, in the U. S. S. R., is separated from the State and the schools from the Church. Liberty of worship and liberty of anti-religious propaganda is allowed to all citizens."

Since the war, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is officially recognised and a certain amount of effective liberty of worship is extended to the population. But the teaching of religion and especially the catechism remains practically a dead letter, for the earlier laws prohibiting all religious teaching to those under 18 is strictly enforced.

The Soviet schools are not simply neutral to religion. They have become one of the greatest influences in the anti-God movement to banish all religious ideas from the human soul. <sup>5</sup>

For instance, all references to prayer, to God, to the traditional faith of the Russian people, are systematically excluded from the schools' editions of old Russian authors. In the books and pictures for children, the Church, priests, religion are ridiculed in coarse anecdotes. <sup>6</sup> Some blasphemous passages, censured by the Imperial government, were reintroduced by the Soviets in their editions of

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<sup>3</sup> Собрание узаконений (Collection of laws and decrees 1918, n° 18, p. 263).

<sup>4</sup> *Idem* (Collection of laws 1929, n° 35, p. 358, art. 18).

<sup>5</sup> Аркадий Гайдар — Мои Воспоминания - Государственное издательство детской литературы Москва, that is to say: Arcadio GAIDAR, *Memoirs*, Moscow, 1947, Edition of official literature for children in which, pp. 14-17, the author parodies the parables.

<sup>6</sup> For example, in the works of *Pushkin*, the "Gabriellada", a blasphemous poem on the Annunciation.

classic authors. In all works printed in the U. S. S. R. the words God, Virgin, and others are always written in small letters. More pernicious are the science and history books in which everything is taught from the materialistic point of view.

About 1930 actual antireligious catechisms were issued adapted for children of various classes of society. In question and answer, it was taught that God did not exist, that Christ is a myth, that man is only evolved from monkeys, etc.... It is true that, since 1941 antireligious reviews have been suppressed, but recent circulars point out to the directors of the Komsomols (communist youth) that they are obliged to fight against any remains of religious superstition among the young and to teach them to look at everything from a scientific viewpoint. The materialist trend in all teaching is maintained. Young people are enlisted in official organisations which all put forward material, artistic and technical progress as the one object in life. All these school and legal systems aim at directing every cultural publication and activity along materialistic lines.

We are at the moment able to have direct relations with men who are the products of these last thirty years of antireligious propaganda. During the late war, several hundred thousands of people, officially described under the initials "D. P." have been transplanted from Russian territory into Western Germany. What has Communism done to their naturally Christian souls?

On coming into contact with the Orthodox religious centres established by the earlier emigrés, these D. P. s, mostly going on for forty years of age return to the faith of their childhood. The young people, on the contrary, remain impervious to all religious influence as a rule. The cause is, first of all, due to an instinctive distrust of any kind of propaganda, a distrust acquired in a country where all is propaganda. But there is also another much more serious reason. Not only is Marxist youth without any knowledge, however elementary, of religion, but their souls are void of all spirituality. A young Soviet girl, invited to a meeting of Orthodox students, cried out on seeing the ikons, in a voice half inquisitive, half tolerant, "Oh, look at the gods! Which is the chief god?" However, apart from the convinced and fanatic godless youths, of whom there is a considerable number, most of the young people of the second emigration do not show any hostility to religion. They are willing to ask questions and to show a certain interest. But their hearts are untouched. The soviet training has rivetted the soul to earth and religion seems useless and unreal to the "new

man." In the war against religion, the soviet régime has concentrated, not only on the control of man's reason, but on the subconscious also. Their success has been complete. The only standards accessible to Soviet youth are those of this world, and of those, the most materialistic. For him, the next world does not exist; he gets on without it. Pragmatism is his sole philosophy.

It is extremely difficult to establish contact with souls like these, even when as is often the case, — especially in the case of young girls — they are not morally degraded. The need for dissimulation and lying under a régime of informers and of oppression of conscience has made them reserved and uneasy. Any real soul to soul contact is at present undesirable to them, sometimes painful, if not impossible. If such is the condition of their souls today, what can one think of the future, when time and liberty have given them the opportunity of feeling more normal?

The task of preaching Christ to them will remain an arduous one for a long period, but all hope is not lost. Already, among many young girls, there is discernible a sincere interest in the religious way of life. Boys are more inclined just now to discuss national and political questions.

## II. THE INFLUENCE OF SECULAR SCHOOLS ON RUSSIAN YOUTH IN EXILE

The children of Russian emigrés of the first world war have come under the influence of the secular schools of the West. The neutrality of the system has had fatal consequences, and education has been drawn hither and thither by every new tendency and philosophy, to the loss of its Christian synthesis.

Although his school is a potent centre of interest for the child, it rarely has a complete hold on him. He remains open to the manifold influences that await him outside the classroom. When religious influence, however derived, was strong enough to dominate these manifold currents of the western world, the secular schools did not prevent the child's soul from developing a religious life. Often the treasure of Orthodox faith was passed on to the children of emigrés through the medium of the family. If the latter is deeply religious and practising, the richness of the children's spiritual life is surprising. In default of family influence, religious awareness may be developed by reading, by the "Thursday schools" and above all by the liturgy and the beauty of the offices of Lent and Holy Week.



In addition to the family, there are numerous Russian organisations out of school which cater for the training of emigrés' children<sup>7</sup>. If the organisation works at this training in a truly religious spirit, the results in the long run are nearly always positive, even if the child does not show a great attraction for religion.

The emigré Russian society itself contributes to the preservation of the Orthodox faith, for, with the fervour of minorities, it clings to its ancestral traditions and preserves its religious structure from the laicising influence of its surroundings. But all too often, when the young ones reach working age, they go off in search of a more indulgent life and lose all contact with their own religion. Already some of the emigration centres are lifeless.

There are two other factors which lessen the influence of the secular schools. The first is the impossibility for the great majority of young Russians, owing to the financial difficulties of their relations, to finish their studies in the West. A great number have to leave school too early in order to earn their bread. The second is faulty guidance in their studies. Very few Russian parents know how to direct their children's schooling. For instance, in France, where secondary education is still in essence made up of classical studies, the Russian children in the lycées are put by their parents into the modern side, thus by-passing the real classical French training.

In consequence of these combined factors, the average religious type of young Russian in the West is shaped outside the influence of the school. And yet, in spite of that, above all since the great moral crisis which swept Europe from 1939 to 1945, they do not in general differ greatly from the same type belonging to the country in which they have grown up. They are blasé, careless, recoiling from any spiritual effort, not because of any philosophical reasons, but simply because it cuts across the manifestations of the material life which presses upon them.

Occasionally, however, the secular school has really made its mark on the religious conscience of the young Russians attending it. There are boys and girls who have taken up scientific research and have acquired an outlook which is expressed in the words of one of them, a young scientist and an assistant to eminent scientists. He said to me: "To my way of thinking, God is not a necessary

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<sup>7</sup> Orthodox organisations for Russian emigré youth: 1) Russian scouts, 2) the sokols (sports and gymnastic associations), 3) the Vitiaz (scouts with military tendencies), 4) the Christian movement of Russian students. This is the only organisation in which religious training is put in the first place.

hypothesis." The secular school has been even more deadly to some natures eager for sacrifice, especially girls. The school has awakened in them an attraction for the West and its civilisation, but to a West deprived of all Christian substance. For them the humanist cult of the beautiful is everything. These individuals who have fallen under the spell of modern paganism, become allergic to Christianity. Religious arguments are doomed to failure before the blind, aggressive rationalism set up against them and which, even when driven from its position by serious reasoning, avoids defeat by new subterfuges. For such souls a return to God can only be achieved after interior agonies ; for them to see that the beautiful is not always the good, nor often even just, or that the world has need of salvation and that this is achieved by the intervention of a transcendent Reality, they must first experience in their own lives the catastrophe of the cross.

The future prospects for the Orthodox faith, as for that of other denominations, are dreary enough in many respects and one might, indeed, despair of them, did not the Holy Spirit manifest Himself with so much strength and light as to give those who have the care of souls confidence and courage. Alongside human wisdom there is always the inexhaustible wisdom of God which illumines with a new light the words of the Master speaking of His Church : "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

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# Influence of Courses in Religion in Neutral Schools

## REPORTS FROM

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In some countries a course in religion is provided for by law in the curriculum. The second part of this issue will deal with such courses. We are here concerned only with the way it affects the atmosphere of the neutral schools. The Rev. Fr. TROQUET has elsewhere <sup>1</sup> described the results obtained by the catechists appointed to the public schools in the Liège district.

If these catechists were suppressed, the heads of the schools would be the first to be disappointed: the courses have helped in creating a healthy and happy atmosphere.

What are the results on the religious life of the children? It is hard to estimate them, as they are of so personal a nature.

Many of the children who attend the courses do not practise any religion, owing to the indifference or hostility of their families. But the contact with religion is no doubt beneficial to them. Many who come from indifferent homes become accustomed to saying morning and evening prayers; and later on at a high school one finds them again attending the religious course, having learnt to value it.

It is not only the children who benefit by the good influence of the teachers of religion; some members of the staff attend the lessons and draw profit from them. The tact and pleasant manner of the catechists cause them to be received sympathetically and by their means many of the prejudices against religion are broken down.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n. I.



We might add two other pieces of evidence. The first is concerned with the starting of a religious course in a Brussels primary school. The second comes from a wellknown Italian professor and writer. As a youth and young professor, Fausto MONTANARI was in the lyc  e when religious instruction was forbidden there. He gives us a comparison between the atmosphere before and after the signing of the Concordat.

## I. A THREE YEARS CATECHIST'S EXPERIENCE IN TWO OFFICIAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BRUSSELS

In Belgium the law provides a lesson in religion for at least half an hour a day in the public neutral schools. This half hour is either the first or the last of the morning or afternoon periods. The pupils who do not wish to attend must hand in a written note from their parents.

The parish priest — or to speak more exactly, the ministers of the various sects — is responsible for the courses. The law allows him either to give it himself or to delegate some one approved by the local authority.

The Reverend Canon GILLET <sup>2</sup> tells us how and with what success he introduced religious courses in the schools in his parish :

In November 1946 after some brief negotiations with the Local Authorities of X... religion classes were given again for the first time in about forty years in some of the borough schools. The experiment began piecemeal, quickly spread and was soon introduced in all the schools of the borough. Here I am dealing with the schools in my own parish.

The religion classes are, subject to my control, in the hands of six delegates chosen by myself and approved by the Authorities ; two school teachers approved by me complete the number.

The lesson is given each day for half an hour and begins at 8.30 a. m. It is obligatory on all the children except those with a written exemption signed by the parent.

About 30 % of the girls and 34 % of the boys follow these classes. Last year a third of the girls old enough to make their Profession of Faith did not follow the course — several were not baptised, and they belonged to the U. L. B. (Universit   Libre de Bruxelles) type of people. However, 90 % of those who have made their Communion still follow the classes in the prim-

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<sup>2</sup> Born at On on March 15<sup>th</sup> 1900, Canon P. GILLET was ordained priest at Malines on 23<sup>th</sup> September 1922. Licentiate in Philosophy, Doctor and Master of Canon Law. Professor of Ecclesiastical History and of Canon Law at Malines Seminary from 1926 to 1944. — Address : Abbaye de la Cambre, 11, Brussels, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

ary school, although they made their Profession of Faith in the fifth form. All the ex-pupils, except one girl from a neighbouring village, follow the religious course in the lycée ; among the boys I am unaware of a single exception.

After overcoming much mistrust on the part of the lady teachers, the delegates now enjoy kindly and courteous dealings with the teachers ; several teachers try to ease the work of the delegates ; the course is well looked upon, apart from one or two exceptions. The Head, whilst preserving a strict neutrality, shows kindness and discretion.

In the boys' departments there was at first almost hostility to the delegates and the classes. Now, except for three teachers, the staff is either indifferent or well-disposed. The headmaster tries to make things easier for the delegates.

Some children belong to a Catholic background thanks to the influence of the mother ; very few fathers practise their religion regularly ; some mothers are very good indeed.

In some places there is complete indifference : if a minimum of two years catechism class were not a condition for " Solemn Communion," the children would get off the religion course.

Finally, some fathers are hostile. The child follows the two year course — a concession to the mother or grandmother, or else because the father wants to have a celebration regarded by him as a purely secular affair.

The girls show plenty of goodwill. They all like the classes ; they come willingly despite the early hour and perhaps some late going to bed. Some show keenness and generosity. Yet may have to overcome indifference in the home or school as well as their own egotism which is often encouraged rather than reprimanded at home.

The children have great trust in the delegates who are not looked on as " ladies like the others."

One can get the little ones to make some effort, provided it be short, out of love of God ; many make sacrifices ; a number of the bigger girls understand that Catholicism is primarily a life. However, few go regularly to Communion. There is less routine than in Catholic schools. Progress has been made in sincerity. Some are conscious of their responsibility in the school. I don't know a single boy or girl with the slightest human respect.

The boys, especially in recent months, seem more difficult to get at. It is not easy to draw them out of their materialism ; to get them to make some effort of their own so long as school duties carry painful sanctions ; to get them to take a real interest in what they half-heartedly listen to. Yet most of them are fond of the delegates. With the boys the chief requirement is variety, initiative, new methods. For two or three weeks last year an experiment in self-government was tried with good results.

*Methods* vary with each catechist. The method is less important than the spirit with which one works and the zeal one shows. This diversity of method in a school is a remedy against routine and monotony.

It is too early to expand upon the good *results* attained here and in other parishes. But already we may say that hundreds and thousands of children in our State schools are benefiting from a daily religious class, hearing about God, whereas before 1946 many of them could not make a sign of the cross.

Considered by themselves the results are noteworthy. They are even more so when one thinks of the various contacts which the appearance of a catechist at a public school makes possible.

This course in religion, if it is to bear any fruit, must be *backed up by parish work in the homes and in conjunction with the work done in the school*. I become more convinced of this every year.

We must make contact with the parents — with the mother, of course, and also with the father especially if he is indifferent or hostile. Only rarely do these contacts fail to bring home the importance of the course, of preparation for the Profession of Faith, and of receiving the Sacraments.

Work with the children. Here I speak of First Holy Communion. We get permission for preparation for First Holy Communion for 60 % or 70 % of the children between the ages of seven and ten. But many prejudices on the part of the parents have to be overcome. Our best allies are the children themselves who keenly desire it — with few exceptions — and who pray and make little sacrifices for this intention.

The immediate preparation is done in the parish if that is possible and by the delegate.

Very few of the fathers attend the First Communion of their children. Very few mothers stay away from it. As for the children who have wrung a permission out of their parents, it is, as a youngster of nine said : “ the Real Communion. ”

The delegates unanimously agree that there is a change in most children after their First Communion ; with some — especially the older ones — it is certainly a transformation of grace.

Some children go to Confession regularly, not through any constraint or habit or to imitate others, but in order “ to have a clean heart and the sense of contentment after it. ”

Mass for the children is said every Sunday in the parish Church. All the children are invited ; those preparing for the Profession of Faith are compelled. The little girls like to come ; some of the boys are not so keen ; leavers still come regularly. A curate explains the Mass and helps them to take an active part in it. Though the talk may bore them, they do like to be able to sing.

Weekly meetings of the altar boys — from our school or the local secondary school — are asked for but not imposed. The altar boys enjoy a certain prestige among their friends.

Every fortnight there are meetings in the parish for the 5th and 6th form of the primary school. They have noisy games and practical work, making cribs, doing playlets, painting Scriptural scenes. Closer ties are formed, and it is a good opportunity for creating a religious spirit and getting to know each child personally and showing them how they belong to a parish.

These out-of-school meetings continue the action started in the classroom, for they help the delegates to get the children to live as Christians in a lay and neutral surrounding whereas the parish develops its religious influence on the homes.



Please God this undertaking will by the grace of God bring unChristian families to be live Catholics and eventually radiate in their turn a live positive religion.

## II. INDIRECT ACTION EXERCISED BY RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN THE STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS RUN IN ITALY

To give the background of his experience, Signor MONTANARI<sup>3</sup> begins by surveying the evolution of religious life and teaching in Italy.

Secularism, of which the "Age of Reason" was the sponsor, exacerbated the difficulties of the "Roman Question" in Italy. Moreover, after the establishment of the kingdom of Italy (1861) and the occupation of Rome against the will of the Pope (1870), the Italian State entertained a certain mistrust of those Catholics who practised their faith openly. The conflict between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy led to the leaders of the government being increasingly drawn from the ranks of those hostile to Catholicism. The effect of this move reached to the universities and in consequence to all schools and the entire cultural training of the nation. The theological faculties at the universities were abolished; religious teaching banned in the secondary schools and, in practice, in the primary ones as well.

The first World War, and especially the defence of the national territory in 1917-18, showed how unjust was the suspicion of the State against its citizens who were faithful to their Church and its head. Many of them gave an example of the greatest heroism; and at the same time the clergy and military chaplains inspired moral strength in the darkest hours of the war.

After 1918 the hostility towards active Catholics diminished perceptibly. The obstacles placed by the Holy See to Catholic participation in politics disappeared after the formation of a popular party with a Christian basis. The Holy See made no objections (1919). The great success of this party proved that it did not represent simply the "clericals," but a widespread movement of public opinion.

Fascism, which began with an explicitly anticlerical programme, thought fit, after it had been established in power, to bow to the new situation. If, on the one hand, it gave ground for the protests of the Holy See against its action against Catholic youth organisations (1926 and 1931), it also abandoned the secularising policy of the liberal governments which had preceded it, and it signed the Concordat of 1929.

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<sup>3</sup> Fausto MONTANARI has taught Italian and Latin literature in the State lycées. His writings deal with literary criticism, spiritual subjects and also short stories. His especial talent is for short, sound essays. We may single out for mention: *Il peccato*, *Fuga dalla solitudine*, *Fatica di essere uomini*. Fausto MONTANARI contributes to the review *Studium*, the organ of the Lauréats d'Action Catholique, and to educational reviews: *Scuola e Vita*, *La Scuola e l'Uomo*. — Address: Salita S. Brigida 19, Genoa 103, ITALY (Editor's note).

By this Concordat, religious instruction, optional since 1926, became obligatory in all State primary and secondary schools for those pupils whose parents did not desire them to be dispensed. After 1930, it was established in all the secondary State schools for a period of one hour a week, the instruction to be given by professors approved by the ordinary of the diocese; these professors were for the most part priests.

What changes have taken place in the school atmosphere as a result of this religious instruction during the last twenty years?

We cannot appreciate them unless we take into account the period preceding the Concordat. Professor MONTANARI helps us by giving us his impressions as a pupil and young professor.

Previous to 1930, not only any outward Christian emblems, but almost the very name of God and any allusion to His existence had been banished from the schools. Even professors who were themselves practising Christians had been trained to keep silent on the subject, in conformity with strict liberalism which excluded any religious notion from public education. If religion were mentioned, it was with irony or ridicule.

Perhaps I may be allowed to recall some of my experiences while at school between the years of 1916 and 1924. One day the headmaster said to us: "Remember that God does not exist: your God is your father and your mother, they have created you." In the high school the first year master quoted a text of Holy Scripture (I found out afterwards that he was a Christian). I believed that he was citing it in mockery.

Later one of my companions took pleasure in swearing. Although I was myself a practising believer, I thought he had a perfect right to blaspheme as our education had taught us that religion was purely a question for the individual. The only semireligious allusions that I can remember were such phrases as the "Unknowable," beyond the realm of science.

I do not recollect that in any of my schools I was set to read any Christian poetry. Dante himself was considered as a patriotic author of fine imagination, but his world was presented to me as one of pure mythology, without any connection with one's personal spiritual life. The only religious allusion that I can remember is to the angelic lady of the "*dolce stil nuovo*," but this was incomprehensible to me, for at school the words "angel" and "God" had no meaning for me. Later on, not without effort and astonishment, I discovered for myself that a Christian could not go all the way with Leopardi in his sombre despair, by whom I had been enthralled without ever comparing his thought with religious thought.

As a consequence of this training, I felt a lively embarrassment when, at the beginning of my career as a professor, my conscience led me to mention the names of God and Jesus Christ in simply giving historical facts. To speak of such a subject in front of a class appeared to me to be a novel experience.

Later, I learnt that several of my professors were believers; but, owing to their own education, they kept strictly to the rule against speaking of religion in class.

What effect has the introduction of a religious course into a place so closed to religious influence ?

The introduction of religious teaching to the schools has had the most useful result of removing the ban on alluding to religious matters in the classrooms. The modern pupil does not, indeed, always finish his studies equipped with a religious culture or a very personal religious training ; nevertheless, religion and even the Catholic question are now recognised subjects for discussion in school and reflection outside. The majority of the pupils now leave school convinced or inclined to believe that Christianity is the true religion, even if they deem its observances difficult of practise in both public and private life.

It seems clear that the chief result of religious instruction is not at present so much increase of religion as an effect that was not directly sought. There are fewer and fewer professors whose religion their pupils cannot guess, as was the case in my day. If the State school has not become a school for Catholic training, owing to the heterogeneous beliefs of the masters, at any rate the pupils can arrive at what their beliefs are. Besides which, religious instruction shows them that the natural sciences and history cannot solve all problems, and religion alone holds the key to problems of a higher order.

Finally, the fact that the teachers of religion are priests exercises a beneficial social influence : it tends to bridge the abyss cleft by the Italian tradition between priests and public life. To his pupils' eyes the priest has emerged from the sacristy and is seen to be capable of dealing with any subject. In this way they have been led to realise that any question can be dealt with from the religious point of view.

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# The State Denominational School : Its Qualities and Defects

## REPORTS FROM

J. FACKLER (Germany), A Swiss priest, Émile BAAS (France),  
the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Émilien FRENETTE (Canada)

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## INTRODUCTION

We have noted that a course of religious instruction may change the atmosphere in a school and facilitate contacts between the children and their religious teachers out of school hours. At the same time, the benefits must not be exaggerated : Miss DE LONEUX writes to us as follows :

The religious course may have a tremendous influence, but we must also recognise that many factors exist to limit its effect.

The place of the religious classes in the time-table and the school mentality makes it one "course" among others, that is to say, an endeavour to get into the pupils a collection of merely intellectual facts. Treated in this way, the demands made by the teachers require hard work and, in common with the other courses, a difficult examination in which the pupil must obtain a pass by being word perfect in the data presented him by his instructors. This does not result in a very thorough training in how to lead a Christian life.

Furthermore, the religious instructor, limited by his special subject which is only taken by a certain number of the children, can never take his full share in the life of the school nor of the pupils as such.

Two hours of specialised teaching each week, and that is all.

In short, a course in religion inserted into a completely neutral curriculum has no background. It could have a much better one in an *interdenominational Christian school*. Would not this type of school have the advantage of grouping the children of the various creeds together in an atmosphere favourable to their religious life and to mutual understanding ? Instances can be quoted where

this has been successfully adopted. Experience, however, does not lead us to desire that this system should be universally adopted.

A German master, Rev. Fr. J. FACKLER, thus reports on the sentiments of Catholics and Orthodox Protestants in his country :

Catholics who are aware of what is at stake have no doubt as to the pernicious influence of the interdenominational schools on the children's life as Christians. I have often heard this view expressed in lay teachers' congresses. We in Germany have certainly often heard heated discussions on the question of denominational versus interdenominational schools. We need only recall the work done preparatory to article 7 of the Bonn Constitution. But the parties there were clearly demarcated : Catholics and Orthodox Protestants on the one side, the Socialists and other leftists on the other. It is true that at our congress some of the young teachers were inclined to favour the interdenominational school, but their reasons were very specious when we consider the nature of education in general and Catholic education in particular, and taking into account the unfortunate experience of those countries which have interdenominational systems.

In Germany, after the 1914-18 war, the struggle was started against the Liberals and Socialists. The chief periodicals issued topical articles on the subject. At the present time we are suffering from the presence of the occupying powers, all of whom are in favour of undenominational schooling.

We are therefore inclined to agree with the Catholics and Orthodox Protestants of these countries in giving favourable consideration to the *State denominational school*. But although the *institution* seems estimable in itself, we will learn by experience what becomes of it when the *spirit* that should inform it is lacking.

We will quote here three witnesses only, from different environments. They confirm and complement each other. The Swiss writes from the Catholic cantons, where the background, at any rate in the country districts, is still rather Christian. The other is from Alsace, where the people are divided into Catholics and Protestants, and more affected by a dechristianising spirit which has contributed to secularise the denominational schools. Unlike our Swiss correspondent, M. BAAS does not confine his remarks to religious instruction, but gives us a survey of all the teaching carried out in the Christian schools of Alsace.

## I. RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE COUNCIL SCHOOLS OF FRENCH SPEAKING SWITZERLAND

Our correspondent deals first of all with the scholastic legislation in the Catholic cantons. The *institutions* are favourable to

religious culture.<sup>1</sup> Taken as a whole, the environment is still Christian, but there is a growing indifference to religion in the towns.

Here are a few remarks on the subject of Religious Instruction in French-speaking Switzerland.

In Switzerland, the civil law in matters of religion is principally cantonal. This produces very different situations from one canton to the next. Because of this diversity, it is impossible to give a comprehensive view of religious instruction in Switzerland; that is why I will only speak of the two specifically Catholic Cantons of Romande-Switzerland, Fribourg and Le Valais, in which the state of affairs is very similar.

In these two cantons, the official religion is the Catholic one. Religious instruction is a part of the school curriculum; daily, a lesson is scheduled, given by the lay-teachers themselves. Further, the parish priests may gather the children either at the school, or at the church, for a weekly lesson.

As a rule, it is the school-teachers' duty to teach the Bible and to make the children memorise the chapter of the Catechism corresponding to the lesson given by the priest.

It is to be noted that the lessons given by the school-teachers are at times replaced by Church services to which the pupils attend in a body during school hours: Requiem Masses sung by the children, First Friday Devotions, Stations of the Cross etc., and this, at times, considerably reduces the hours given over to religious instruction in the schools.

The school-teachers, trained in normal schools directed by the clergy are, for the most part, fervent and convinced Christians, who really take to heart their task as educators. In a great number of boroughs, the girls' classes and the lower forms are entrusted to nuns. Many of these are at the same time Zelatrices of the Eucharistic Crusade.

It is certain that this state of affairs fulfils in the best manner the wishes expressed by Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical on Christian Education. Religious instruction being received at the same time from the school-teacher and from the priest in the course of the eight or nine years of compulsory schooling, soaks into the minds of the children and will never be effaced. And this all the more so that, at least in country districts, the environment has, generally speaking, remained Christian, the great mass of people is

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. MARMIER, Director at Friburg Seminary, has sent us some particulars of the scholastic laws in that canton. We make the following extracts from his notes: "Legislation in Friburg, as in all the Swiss cantons, except Soleure, allows that parents have a basic right to Church schools, but what is unique in the Friburg code is that a public, almost official, character is given to the Church schools and they have a right to subsidies from the State and other material advantages. It is the legal sanction of the work of a minority. . . The canton of Friburg has since 1874 made laws which have solved the denominational question and safeguarded the rights of the minorities within its borders." In support of this, the writer quotes the case of the Protestant schools in Friburg itself receiving substantial subsidies from the Government.



faithful to the practice of religion, the families have retained their Christian customs, religion is an integral part of public life.

To this apparently ideal picture, we must add some more sombre touches, however.

The main one is *formalism*, which is caused, partly, by the official character of religious instruction : in spite of the genuine Christian spirit which animates the school-teachers, religion is first presented to children as a matter for study and exams. And, if one puts it into practice, it is doubtless through conviction, but also because there is no question of doing otherwise.

Another difficulty is the *routine* in the manner of teaching religion ; nearly everywhere the practice of learning by heart and of literal explanation of the textbook has been maintained, when the time allotted to religious instruction would allow of useful putting into practice of active methods, and individualised methods of teaching.

Let us also point out that the teaching of Religion officially included in the school curriculum can have the inconvenience of *not being sufficiently incorporated into the life of the Church*. Doubtless, the school districts coincide habitually, at least in country districts with the parishes. But this is not always the case, especially with regard to regional, secondary and professional schools, particularly in boroughs and towns. Pupils of these schools receiving their religious instructions in the classroom have only restricted contact with their parishes, and parish priests feel they are relieved of the care of these children who are looked after by the school chaplains. This difficulty is even more acutely apparent at the present time when the new Diocesan ruling prescribes the Solemn Renewal of Baptismal Vows at the end of the compulsory school years (at the age of 16). It would seem to be necessary, especially during the last years of religious instruction for the children to be in close contact with the parish community and the groups of Catholic Action.

This defective training is no preparation for leading a truly religious personal life. Sometimes, it is true, circumstances encourage illusions.

The deficiencies pointed out, whose consequences are relatively slight in the Christian country districts, are being felt primarily in the towns of the Catholic Cantons, where the percentage of practising Catholics shows a considerable decrease in the last decades. Proof of this could equally be given in the difficulties which the Catholic Action groups encounter in finding militant members among these young people, who, only yesterday, well-escorted by their school-teachers, religious and nuns, flocked to the churches. But these deficiencies appear even more obvious to the parish priests of those regions of protestant majority where they often have the sorrow of witnessing among the least faithful and generous members of their flock, those parishioners who have come from Catholic regions.

These failings do not discredit State denominational schools. They remind us that without the right spirit the best institution will lack in efficacy.

In conclusion, it would seem that, in those favoured districts where school-children know nothing either of religious conflicts or of the terrible opposition which exists between religious life, family life and school life, serious reforms ought to be made, as much in the teaching of religion as such, as in the preparation of these children to the practice of Christian life ; efforts at a deeper formation ; struggle against formalism and routine ; training towards a more personal Christianity and, at the same time, a more communal one, more virile and more conquering. The young people trained in this manner ought, when, because of military training or the necessities of their professional life, the time comes for leaving their village for the large towns or the 'mixed' districts, to be, not merely warned against the dangers menacing their faith, but they should feel sent out to show forth their convictions, to be witnesses to an authentic and missionary Christianity.

## II. THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AND CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ALSACE

Fellow of Philosophy, professor in the Kléber lycée at Strasburg, M. Émile BAAS <sup>2</sup> knows Alsace very well. He first describes the scholastic legislation in his province :

The primary schools in Alsace are still governed by the Falloux Law of 1850, a French law to which the Germans after 1870 added a certain number of regulations. The main body of the Act, apart from a few points of detail, has been maintained after 1918 and 1944.

By the terms of this Act the State schools are denominational (Catholic and Protestant) with interdenominational schools in special cases specified in the Act. In the former category of schools the children are separated according to their religion for all schooling and receive religious instruction in the school for three hours a week as officially prescribed ; in the latter type of school the children of different denominations are all together for secular teaching, but they also receive on the school premises denominational religious instruction. In both cases the general teaching must have a Christian character.

These are the types of school laid down in the Statute Book.

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<sup>2</sup> M. Émile BAAS has published various books : *Réflexions sur le régionalisme* (Éditions des Scouts de France, 1945), *Situation de l'Alsace* (Strasbourg, Éditions de l'Est, 1946), *L'humanisme marxiste* (Colmar, Alsatia, 1947). — Address : 14, rue Fischart, Strasbourg, FRANCE (Editor's note).

This schools' system appears on the whole to be favourable to the development of the Christian way of life. It remains to be seen whether secular subjects are studied in a Christian atmosphere and whether special care is given to religious training.

*In practice* the actual position is different. With the exception of schools run by Religious bodies (who are allowed to teach in State schools) and those run by fervent lay Catholics, the spirit of religion which should inform *the whole teaching* has disappeared. The text-books are, on the whole, the same as those used in the lay schools in the rest of France ; school subjects are taught in the same spirit of religious neutrality as in the lay schools without any precise reference to a Christian background. This background might be made to make some appearance on the occasion of some great liturgical feast when reading and recitation lessons may assume a Christian note. But apart from this, religion does not pervade school life, excluding, as I have said, those places where Religious or devout laymen make use of the religious bias allowed by law to be given in denominational schools.

The *religious lesson* itself is taken by almost all the pupils, although the law provides for dispensations (less than one in a thousand avail themselves of this provision). However, the teachers who by law should give this teaching do not give more than one of the three hours prescribed, and moreover, they are not all agreed on this aspect of their teaching vocation. Several have had themselves dispensed from it with the connivance of the local authorities or by tacit agreement with the religious authorities. Some would like to see a general dispensation, either through religious indifference or lack of faith, or else out of fear of insufficient training for this particularly difficult subject.

What has become of religious instruction in such conditions ? With the exception of the fine examples mentioned above, it must be said that the religious training is of a ritualistic, sociological, notional Christianity rather than an existential Christianity. The school does hand on Christian morals, initiates to Christian rites, teaches the catechism, that is, it gives a notional, intellectual knowledge of Christianity, but nowadays only too often it fails to arouse and inspire a Christian life or to form men who in their hearts feel the call of Faith to be a call to life and to a witness. Such is the drama of all traditionally Christian circles.

The above is a brief summary of the present state of Christian schools in Alsace.

Without any doubt, this forms a contrast to the optimistic expectations to which a reading of the schools laws gives rise. How is this gulf between theory and practice to be explained ?

When we in Alsace examine *the reasons for the falling away in the Christian spirit* we are too often tempted to view the matter in a superficial controversial way : the blame is placed before the anti-religion activity of official or semi-official bodies which, openly or secretly, try to undermine the legal



basis of the law for denominational schools. That such action has gone on and is going on, is undeniable. That it is partly responsible for the change in character with regard to some teachers, is also true. But only a very mediocre sociologist would accept that as a full explanation. The real state of the matter is more complex and more serious.

A century ago Christian schools in Alsace came to the Christian families and villages. It was in close continuity with parish life in which the traditional structures had remained intact, and had even absorbed and integrated the masses of the workers who had concentrated in the new industrial centres. In short, the Christian school was set *in a Christian context*. However, for a century now things have been changing. Alsace has indeed put up more resistance than other countries to the great tide of dechristianization ; but it was unable to resist entirely its slow steady force. The average Christian family no longer has the Christian basis nor the Christian life of a century past. The parish has largely ceased to be a living community. The whole social milieu, influenced by the press, the wireless, the cinema etc., is becoming dechristianised. It is not surprising, then, that the teaching body also does not conceive its educative work as it did a century ago and its function of *Christian* teaching does not strike it as so obvious as it did a hundred years ago. If there has been a decline in the Christian spirit, it is because there has been an all-round decline. The school is one with its social environment.

Must we resign ourselves, under the pressure of environment, to seeing the denominational schools become more and more like the secular ones ? Or must we scorn a body whose spirit is vegetating ? M. BAAS will have nothing to do with either of these extreme solutions.

We should neither accept too easily nor condemn too harshly such a state of affairs.

To accept it too easily as a sufficient solution to the problem of the Faith among the masses would show that we fail to see that tradition, ritual and a purely notional knowledge of religious truths can by themselves produce a spiritual sclerosis and can eventually make the soul impervious to grace ; it would show that we forget how such a Christian will be always vitally and existentially below the neo-Christian who has been trained on purely Gospel methods.

To reject this traditional Christianity as a by-product of Christian education would be a no less grave mistake. That would be to forget that tradition, ritual and notional knowledge of religious truths can always be a kind of sub-structure upon which the genuine Christian, the man of Faith, Hope and Charity, can in time be fully developed. It would be to forget, even putting the matter at its lowest, that if this nominal Christian summons a priest to his death-bed because of a tradition taught him at school, he thus has a unique opportunity for putting himself vitally and existentially in the hands of God.

In short, if the religious *cadre* in its purely sociological dimensions has perhaps no intrinsic value, it does offer some temporal arrangement in which the message of the Good News can be given.

In considering the religious formation given in our schools as a minimum, we must still make the most of this minimum. Only a very misplaced spiritual integritism would gladly see the disappearance of this minimum.

The problem is not to scorn what exists, but to revivify it from inside, and in particular to transform the structure of religious teaching to make it effectively make up for the deficiencies of the family and, to some extent, of the parish. This is the idea of the Centre of Christian Teaching (Strasbourg) which by its work and its publications tries to familiarise the teachers with the new methods of religious teaching and thus provides the master with a new pedagogical tool and a new outlook on the requirements of a living Christianity.

If the Administration, drawing its conclusions from the fact that religious teaching forms part of the curriculum, allows the voluntary teachers legal facilities for training, a renewal of the religious education of children may be looked for on a grand scale.

It must never be forgotten that everything comes back to the question of personnel. Where a master has found for himself the true bases of Christianity, the religious training he gives will also be a training for living. Yet we must not forget that this action itself must be set in a wider frame and must vitalise the parish and the village as well as the school. The Christian vitality of the school depends at least as much on the vitality of the parish as on the personal action of the teacher.

### III. RELIGIOUS TRAINING IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC (CANADA)

Two and a half years ago (30 June — 3 July, 1947), an important congress was held in Montreal College. All the secondary school teachers came together to listen to a series of reports on religious training. The Rev. Jacques TREMBLAY, S. J., has given our readers an account of the principle findings of the congress.<sup>3</sup> In preparation for it, researches were carried out among teachers, lay and clerical, and the parochial clergy. The Rt. Rev. Mgr. Émilien FRENETTE, Director of the "Séminaire Saint-Jean," thus sums up the results, which are still as topical as ever. This communication confirms those received from Switzerland and Alsace :

<sup>3</sup> See *Lumen Vitae*, II (1947), n° 3. The records of the congress are also of interest : they are published by the Permanent committee of secondary education in the Province of Quebec. In this Province the government schools are denominational, either Catholic or Protestant.

Most of our correspondents subscribe to the fact that, if some professionals have given up all religious practices, a much greater number are lacking in a truly convinced and apostolic Christian spirit, in a religion of spirit and life. "Formalism" (the word often recurs) in belief in remote, abstract truths and in observances empty of meaning. In short, a lack of the real spirit of Christianity which should animate and penetrate every thought and act, including pious exercises. Hence, the problem sensed by lay teachers and which they draw to our attention. They know where to lay the blame: family education, social surroundings, human frailty. But they see the importance of action on our part, above all during the decisive stage which our pupils have reached. Moreover, all of them urge us to intensify the fine work of an integrally Christian education, with even greater adaptations to the new requirements of our times.

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# The Spirit of UNESCO

by PAUL DE VISSCHER

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The creation in 1946 of an international organisation for the promotion of education, science and culture will remain, whatever happens, one of the most ambitious experiments of our age.

After the defeat of the totalitarian regimes, the allied nations appear to have realised that the deepest cause of war lies less in political or economical factors than in the minds and hearts of the peoples. Even material compulsion plays only a secondary part in casting a people into a war of aggression, for, unlike the tyrant of old, the modern dictator must pay heed to public opinion. The dictator can form, direct, even create, public opinion; he can never ignore it. Thus to some extent all modern forms of government are guided by public opinion. A democratic government exercises power through the freely expressed wishes of the majority; a dictatorial government is one exercised according to the will of a created and controlled opinion. In last few years we have seen the ease with which public opinion can be artificially created. It is sufficient to give the citizens a "close" education, to train the youth in a purely utilitarian and national philosophy, and to cut off any contact with other philosophies and cultures by checking the free movement of ideas; as a man needs an ideal, he stretches out to one that is attainable, and with greater zest if that ideal appears as the only one.

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Education such as this results in an impoverishment of the human personality and is an obstacle to the attainment of the individual's supernatural end. It is also a menace to international peace and order. A people ignorant of its neighbours and brought up in the exclusive worship of its own nation becomes a highly explosive material easily drifting into most unjust and cruel wars.

This obvious fact is the justification for the UNESCO, whose charter contains these words :

“ Wars come to birth in the minds of men and it is in men's minds that the defences of peace must be raised. ”

The extremely practical end which this institution has in view is to contribute to the cause of peace by fighting for the intellectual freedom of man and insuring that the individual has free access to the sources of education, science and culture. The ideal is to create a world wherein all men of all nations may be able to make use of stores of knowledge so as to form judgments of their own, a world in which each one will exercise the power to choose both in fact and by right. Since the interests of peoples are interlinked and as the greatest obstacle to peaceful international relations lies in the fact that the people are blinded by their immediate interests and fail to perceive their solidarity or the sacrifices called for, it is to be hoped that the free access of the masses to education, science and culture will directly foster the cause of peace as a world consciousness gradually takes the place of a purely national feeling.

UNESCO is not a super-State. It has neither the funds nor the power to realise this ideal. Nor is any country today in a mood to relinquish its sovereign rights over the education and instruction of its citizens within its own frontiers. UNESCO is simply a meeting at which the representatives of the fifty member States can work out together their general line of action in accordance with the ideal laid down in the charter. The resolutions thus adopted have therefore only advisory force and a State may accept or reject them at will.

However, it would be a mistake to minimise the importance of the institution. UNESCO represents the public conscience of the member States in the spheres of education, science and culture. The ideas to which its resolutions give a voice necessarily have a great influence on the practical attitude of governments which fear above all to be taken for reactionary or sluggish. For this reason alone, it matters very much that religious bodies in general and Catholics in particular should be alive to the ideological tendencies of UNESCO.

Take for instance the direct action of UNESCO in undeveloped countries which are not autonomous. At the request of the Economic and Social Council a plan has been worked out to give technical assistance for these regions and especially for protectorates. This plan involves an enterprise far bigger than any previous experiments : it undertakes to advise governments on all technical problems concerned with education, science and culture, such as training of teachers, choice of pedagogical material, press, films, etc. What is to be the attitude of UNESCO to religion and to the missions already founded in these lands ? These will be tests of the role it intends to assume in the moral training of the native peoples. Are superstition and pagan cults to be combatted, or just ignored, or perhaps regarded as bits of folk-lore worthy of preservation ? These are fundamental problems in which Catholics have definite views to defend. No satisfactory answer has yet been given.

The same difficulty arises with regard to labour camps, child welfare centres and model schools set up by UNESCO in Europe and the Middle East. By its choice of books and teachers, UNESCO will contribute not only to the instruction of youth, but to its whole character. Willy-nilly, UNESCO is bound to exercise an influence on the moral and religious training of all whom it contacts. The same applies to all its activities. Thus in translating and popularizing the great classics, there arises the delicate task of right selection ; in the revision of history text-books, of UNESCO's own publications, or of popular treatises such as that on the Rights of Man drawn out at Paris during the last General Conference. These examples could be multiplied indefinitely, since every item on the programme touches on morals and religion.

What is the philosophic trend of UNESCO ? This is a question frequently asked. And in particular, what is the philosophy of its Secretariat which is its main driving force ? Not easy questions to answer. A complete answer would have to take into account all the possible philosophical permutations and combinations of the fifty States which make up UNESCO ; fifty peoples who represent every shade and difference of philosophical and religious opinion. In these circumstances it would be foolish to try to think of UNESCO as representing some single definite philosophical system. If some Catholics have cherished such a hope, they should abandon it. By its very constitution, UNESCO is an alliance between opposing and often contradictory schools of thought which meet to work out a scheme of action as far as possible without sacrifice of principle.

UNESCO numbers among its members the three people's Democracies (Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland). They really represent the USSR which thinks it more politic not to be a member. Their membership was considered a great advantage at the beginning, but is now a big hindrance to its smooth working by making it overcautious about offending any one at all. In official circles this restraint is still valued as holding out the hope, a vain one we think, of converting the People's Democracies to the idea of tolerance and the preservation of UNESCO's character of universality. But what needs settling at once is whether this universality is worth the price paid, namely, the paralyzing of the whole organization. Much matter has been up for discussion in the last three years, and it is obvious that the General Conference more and more openly expresses its resentment at the systematic obstruction on the part of the People's Democracies. The vote at the last General Conference on UNESCO's programme for Germany and Japan was significant in this respect.

In contrast with the General Conferences whose members change and which are apt to express contemporary opinion, the Secretariat is a stable and practically permanent body. Its general character to-day is that received from its first Director General, Dr. Julian Huxley in 1946. The date and the name suggest that the Secretariat reflects both the then fashionable ideas and the strong personality of Dr. Huxley. He has expressed his ideas in a pamphlet "The Philosophy of UNESCO." In it he makes clear that he meant to give to that organization a scientific and materialistic stamp, once much in vogue, but now outmoded. For Huxley the intellectual liberation of man implies his liberation from all dogma and faith, except the purely scientific. Religion as such is but one form of obscurantism ; religion and science are contradictory concepts.

Doubtless this so-called philosophy has had a deep influence on the members of Secretariat who generally figure at its meetings. Against this purely scientific interpretation, some authoritative voices have been raised at the General Conference, notably M. Jacques Maritain in 1947 at the Mexican Conference, and Mgr. Maroun in 1948 at Beirut.

The resignation of Dr. Huxley and his replacement in 1948 by M. Jaime Torres Bodet, former Minister of Education and Foreign Affairs in Mexico, were not unconnected with this matter.

The new Director General is a curious mixture of enthusiasm and dour realism, energy and seeming indolence. He is very prac-



tical and intends to carry whatever is really feasible in UNESCO's vast programme. He quickly got that body to accept his skilfully condensed priority programme which avoids considerable waste of energy. His hand is not absolutely free and he knows it. He has to reckon with the General Conferences which are only too careless about conciseness, just as he must reckon with the executive council and the Secretariat he found already installed.

With this one reservation we think the religious bodies may trust M. Torres Bodet, and expect from a benevolent neutrality. If ever he publishes his personal views on the philosophy of UNESCO, as did his predecessor, his pamphlet might well have the title "The Pluralism of UNESCO." From among the various philosophies M. Bodet refuses to make a choice. He rules out none and he does not attempt to make a compound of the lot. He holds that UNESCO is for all, it is a wonderful tool which puts within the power of adherents of all creeds the achievement of a common work on the practical plane of mutual respect and toleration. Here are some passages expressing his pluralist views on the occasion of his accepting office :

We do not expect, of course, common agreement on the philosophic postulates of their behaviour. If UNESCO can be said to have a philosophy it could not be of that sort. It would be quite sufficient to agree on a certain number of principles, e. g. respect for liberty, renunciation of violence, absolute preference for peace with justice to war for the securing of hegemony, the conviction that man is not a means but an end, the condemnation of all discrimination based on sex, race, language, social class or religion. The interdependence of peoples, which cannot to-day be denied, is not only economic and political but also intellectual and cultural. In all quarters of the globe we hear of a new humanism being acclaimed. By this I mean that we can no longer rest content with the picture of man handed down by classic humanism. Daily it becomes clearer that this humanism founded solely on the intellect cannot claim to have a universal appeal. It has failed to solve the problems peculiar to our own Western civilisation. Intellect has used all its latent energies in the field of technics, in making nature subject to man, but has proved quite incapable of releasing the main-springs of moral greatness. After centuries of rationalism, disillusionment has engendered the irrationalism of the dictatorships. Our aim now is not to sacrifice intellect, but to integrate it with those human values contained in other cultures different from ours. Classical humanism used to be confined to the Mediterranean. Modern humanism can know neither limits nor frontiers. To help give shape to this new humanism is the highest aim of UNESCO.

Further on he continued :

The second obstacle I wish to point out (the first being the dissipation of energy) is which arises from the idea — false in my opinion — that UNESCO runs the risk of becoming the organ of propaganda at the service of one particular political system. I don't think I need dwell on such an utterly tendentious misinterpretation. There will be room for all schools of thought provided they help to mutual concord and peace. We are convinced that it is only by respecting the character of each country and by giving ear to its authentic voice that we shall attain that fulness of coordination which must be our one rule. Our sole ambition is to propose to individual ambitions a just aim : to serve man as man.

This pluralist conception of its mission which UNESCO is tending to adopt and which seems to us the only one compatible with its very nature, implies for us Catholics the urgent duty of attendance and vigilance. True pluralism is built from the base upwards, and the harmonious balance of UNESCO depends primarily upon the fact that all opinions and movements can be assured of their rightful place in the drawing up of the practical schemes.

UNESCO can welcome only those who come to it. Without a doubt many Catholics who frequently complain of the atheistic spirit of UNESCO have their own share of responsibility for this defect. Occasional and private attendance is unavailing. There is a corporate obligation on Catholics to continual and general attendance. It seems to us urgent that Catholics of all countries, as a body, on national and international levels, should give thought to UNESCO's programme in the light of their Christian principles, collate their points of view and coordinate their action.

More particularly on the international level we should wish to see established a central body of competent and full-time experts given to study, documentation and action. On them would devolve the duty of presenting clearly the Catholic point of view in connection with the UNESCO programme. One knows, of course, that in Paris there is a Vatican commission, the "Catholic Commission for coordination with UNESCO." The present writer took part in drawing it up. Under the presidency of Mgr. Blanchet and under the direction the Rev. Canon Rupp it undertook the task of facilitating contact between delegates of the hierarchy and representatives of non-governmental bodies interested in UNESCO. This is a necessary work. But the material means at its disposal prevents this body from being a substitute for the organ we have envisaged.

A really effective authoritative body would have the happy

result of avoiding dispersal of energies on the national level where we see numerous non-governmental Catholic organizations vainly endeavouring to follow from day to day the activities of UNESCO in their own particular spheres.

International coordination, however, would be illusory unless there exist similar coordination on the national level. UNESCO is an inter-State organisation. This means that the national policy of each State is there announced and described by official delegates, specifically the Minister of Education. This monopoly possessed by the party in power in a country is not without danger ; it may give expression only to the ideas of that party. UNESCO ought to be the meeting place of all schools of thought and of all ideologies. In this respect we must once again congratulate the new Director General. From the time of his taking office he has insisted on the twofold necessity of associating non-governmental bodies more closely with the daily work of UNESCO, and of establishing in every country a national commission representative of every main school of opinion. This decentralisation at the national level is the necessary condition for UNESCO's ideological pluralism, and it behoves Catholics to be alert in seeing that their Governments accord them their rightful place in the national commission.

The mistakes inevitably committed by UNESCO in drawing up its programme and in carrying it out are due less to preconceived ideas than to lack of true information about public opinion. The same applies to the moral and religious side of the programme. May we repeat : to remedy this state of affairs Catholic bodies must go to UNESCO and put forward their criticisms and resolutions. But this requires careful preparation and collective action.

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# The Problem of School Environments in France

*Reflections on past history and prospects of the future*

by Pierre-Henri SIMON

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## I. REFLECTIONS ON PAST HISTORY

I could have used a simpler title, for instance : the problem of the French school. But I wish to emphasize two things. First the fact which makes the school problem so acute (in France as in every non-totalitarian country), namely, the number of schools which exist and which are not merely separate but often in opposition ; and the question here is that of *agreement on principles*, without which there can be no national education, and of respect for spiritual beliefs, without which there can be no individual education.

Secondly, the word “environment” suggests that the school is not an abstract institution, self-contained and suspended between heaven and earth. It is not *a place* where disembodied spirits teach disincarnated intelligences grammar, geometry and physics.

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<sup>1</sup> Old boy of the “ École Normale Supérieure ” and aggregate of the University, Pierre-Henri SIMON, after having taught in two French high schools, occupied the Chair of French literature at the Catholic University of Lille from 1929 to 1938. At the date he was assigned as Professeur of the « École des Hautes Études » in Ghent, where he occupied the principal Chair until 1949, with an interruption of five years of military captivity. He was nominated Professor of French Literature at the University of Fribourg in 1949. — Journalist, critic, novelist and poet, Pierre-Henri SIMON publishes numerous works. He takes a special interest in the teaching problems and the school question in *L'École et la Nation* (1935), *Destin de la Personne* (Bloud et Gay, 1935), *La France à la Recherche d'une Conscience* (Plon, 1944), *L'Amitié Française* (Liège, Soledì, 1946). His latest book : *L'Homme des Procès* (La Baconnière, 1949), on Malraux, Sartre, Camus and Saint-Exupéry, has been considered an important contribution to the elucidation of the crisis of the contemporary mind. — Address : Pérolles, 21, Fribourg, SWITZERLAND (Editor's note).



It is an *environment* into which each one, master or pupil, enters with his own moral equipment, with his consciousness already shaped by other environments (family, professional, religious, political, etc.) so that there arises in each school a certain moral and intellectual climate, influenced by social conditions, becoming in its turn a source of influence, and a promoter of opinions and acts. And it is this which really gives the schools question its importance. The school is part of life and history; it has a profound effect not only on the persons trained, but also on the destiny of whole communities: families, social classes, private groups, nation, the Church and the different sects; the conscience of all these is supported or modified by the school.

In the modern State, the schools problem has to face two sets of facts. On the one hand, the development of ideas and the critical spirit has produced, in the most countries, a cleavage of minds with regard to the philosophical and the religious position, and this cleavage is all the greater if the nation has long enjoyed an intellectual and cultural life. On the other hand, the development of morals and laws has led to the State taking over the whole work of education, especially popular education. Now all education must have a metaphysical basis, if only some notion of man and his greatest good, since its purpose is to form the man. What then will the State do for the education of its citizens who no longer have a common belief?

Various solutions have been tried; they usually fall into one of three types. The liberal solution, most frequently found in the anglo-saxon countries, consists in leaving a large part in the national education to private initiative. Denominational, professional, local and cultural bodies can found, maintain, inspire and direct their own schools, and the State only reserves to itself a supervisory influence, and in a last resort gives help. But it does not impose any philosophical bias on the teaching. The totalitarian solution, on the contrary, first adumbrated early in the XIXth century by the Napoleonic university, and fully carried out in the first half of the XXth in the fascist and communist states, consists in creating unity of national thought by means of a single school system more or less integrated in the political scheme, but in any case absolutely under its control and made the passive servant of the established régime. Between these two extremes comes the Lay School of the French type, the achievement of the Third Republic, representing a middle way. It includes the liberal system, in so far as it admits the principle of freedom to teach and tolerates private initiative; and also the authoritarian system, since the State takes upon

itself to build up a complete educational system, providing a school in every village without any fees, and making attendance obligatory. So as not to encroach upon anyone's convictions, this school is *lay* in its staff, priests and members of religious orders are excluded ; it is *neutral* in its teaching, which must not go beyond the field of ethics — although families being left free to supplement this with denominational teaching of their own choice outside the school buildings.

In theory and as laid down in the notorious Instructions of 1887 this solution is satisfactory : it is strictly logical and cartesian. The matter taught is a body of objective ideas, and these constitute learning ; about learning opinions are not divided, nor are they so upon what the Instructions of 1887 call "*the essential ideas of human morality, common to all doctrines and necessary for all civilised men.*" A learning and an ethics common to all, that is what the State gives in its schools ; but strict neutrality is observed with regard to private opinions, metaphysical hypotheses, religious beliefs. Unfortunately, there are some fine but none the less decisive elements of which logic takes no account ; the theory of neutral teaching does not reckon with the important part in education played by what we might call its "atmosphere." By systematically excluding the religious point of view, the neutral school was in danger of being irreligious, or at least, of being unable to create that Christian atmosphere, which parents with religious beliefs considered indispensable for the training of their children. More than this, the "universal ethics" of the neutral school boils down to a set of simple imperative rules, expressed by "Don't" : "don't kill, don't steal, don't do to others what you wouldn't like done to you," etc. and, on a higher level, a collection of abstract ideas : the idea of duty, of justice, self-respect, etc. Is this enough ? Morality, above all as taught in a school, meant for children and with a view to the right ordering of their lives, must be practical, positive and live. Morality does not consist in not doing this or that, but in conducting, in creating, in putting oneself heart and soul into matters of true love as much as of true knowledge. That is to say, if instruction can be purely objective, education can hardly be given in a neutral setting.

So we find that lay teaching as given in France has since its inception, with all its acknowledged successes by way of technical pedagogy, tended more and more to evolve from neutrality to dogmatism. Not that its masters have been lacking in loyalty ; on the contrary, the more they have taken their work seriously, the more they have found themselves looking for a surer and more

precise basis for their lessons than the theories of an impoverished kantianism. Condemned by their position to positivist view of the world, they are naturally at first full of enthusiasm for making a religion of science. In teaching the masses, they have later taken to themselves the passions and hopes of these latter ; before 1914, they were to a large extent converted to the socialist creed, while, since 1930, they have taken up the communist theory. In this way, what one might call a "secular faith" has been built up. This expression is current today among defenders of the national schools, and it is significant because unexpected. Its users connote a philosophy of intellectual evidences ; that the word "faith" is employed goes to prove that their philosophy is not simply a system of rational or experimental certainties, but is a conception of life, a concern of the soul.

In these conditions, how can families with a religious outlook and particularly Christian ones, fail to make use of the liberty allowed them by law to establish their own schools ? Even the powerful national schools with their 120,000 teachers and four million pupils have to reckon with the competition of the denominational schools, mostly Catholic, maintained by the sacrifices of the families concerned and by the heroic devotion of the teaching staff, the worst paid, it is said, of all the proletariat. These schools, containing about a fifth of the school-going population, are far from drawing down their flag in spite of extreme financial and material difficulties ; in some of the western provinces, they outclass the national schools and their progress is constant. A recent article in the 'Franc-Tireur', defending secular teaching, pointed out that, in Finistère, between 1925 and 1948, the denominational schools have doubled the number of their pupils, and that in nine other departments, they have increased from 295,000 to 360,000 while the secular schools have decreased from 335,000 to 288,000 pupils.

So we have the two great opposed educational environments. France has its State schools, attracting a popular clientèle often noted for hostility to the Church, attachment to the Republic, for its democratic and revolutionary creed, and staffed by masters who are indoctrinated with the "secular faith" received in their training colleges ; then we have the denominational schools, forced by their situation and by political circumstances to take up a stand which is almost the reverse ; not only spiritual and Christian, but in opposition to the government, and this all the more because of their dependence for their very existence on the leisured or moneyed classes. As anticlericalism became more of a dogma under the Third

Republic, the positions hardened and conflicts became more bitter. There inevitably arose repercussions between scholastic and social circles. The lay schools were tempted to come out of their neutrality as political opinion inclined the masses further to the Left, and these same masses were more and more dechristianised as a result of the teaching they received. In the denominational schools, their defensive attitude became more bitter as the threats to their adherents became more serious, these adherents being profoundly influenced by the schools in their religious and political behaviour. It is a statistical fact that the two regions of North and West France where religion is most practised and there are the greatest numbers of vocations to the priesthood are also those where the voluntary schools flourish.<sup>2</sup>

I am giving here a general conspectus ; if we were to go into more detail, important modifications would have to be made. For example, there is a not inconsiderable number of teachers who are practising Christians in government schools and they often mitigate the strength of secularist aggressiveness. Inversely, the masters in the free schools have been affected by Christian democratic principles, anticommunist but not as a rule antirepublican. All the same, the fact remains that the education of French youth is carried on in an atmosphere of strain and strife. This has the double disadvantage of troubling the peace of the villages and of deflecting into a barren rivalry energies which could be so much better employed in perfecting technique and enlarging the scope of the scholastic system. The system needs to expand, for the voluntary schools, for a long time and the government ones for a shorter time have been lacking in buildings, school requisites and personnel, and the percentage of illiterates is far too high. The struggle for their schools is weighing heavily on the purses of Catholics, who have to find the money, and on the Church which has to staff them. There is dissatisfaction too, in the State schools, where a sounder basis is needed than a sterile neutrality or an unworthy dogmatism.

## II. PROSPECTS OF THE FUTURE

Such is the sad story of the schools in France during the last half century and more. And yet, we need not end on a note of pessimism : future prospects seem to promise better things.

Indeed for some years a perceptible change has been taking place in the approach to this problem. Two points seem to be admit-

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<sup>2</sup> I am not taking Alsace-Lorraine into consideration, for they still enjoy special privileges, and the confessional schools are also national.



ted : the present situation is untenable, and as the partial solutions are of no use, the problem has to be reconsidered in its entirety. What are the causes of this change ?

First, the upheaval of the last war. With the collapse of the political structure, the Vichy government thought it could lay the foundation of a new national education. The training colleges, hitherto the citadels of a sectarian secularism were suppressed and the future masters in the primary schools were to be trained in the lycée and university. Subsidies were granted to the voluntary schools which were, in consequence, subjected to a more stringent control by the public authorities. School programmes were slightly modified, especially in respect of civic and moral teaching, with a view to giving the youth of France a better training in character and patriotic sentiment ; with a view also to draw together believers and agnostics in a common effort for a positive idealism defined in the words : “ *Spiritual values, our country, Christian civilisation* ”. This reform of 1941, associated with the name of M. Jérôme Carcopino, was based in many ways upon fine, sound ideas. Unfortunately it was sponsored by a suspect administration and thus the cause which it sought to serve was compromised. Was it not to be feared that, at the liberation, there would be a reaction which would sweep away this frail edifice and clear the way for a more virulent secularisation which would achieve a monopoly of the nation's schools ?

The reaction was only partial. Catholics had played a noteworthy part in the Resistance movement, and in that movement there was an atmosphere which was favourable to a broad honest reconsideration of the schools question. The consultative Assembly in Algiers had created a *Commission for the examination of the relations between the government and voluntary systems*. M. André Philip was president ; a wise and liberal report was issued. The proposed solution was for the voluntary schools to be merged gradually and with their free consent into a national system of education which would fully respect diversity of religious beliefs ; in particular, it was intended to foster the rapprochement by having the masters of both types of school trained at the same colleges. These proposals remained a dead-letter : the Fourth Republic reestablished the system of the Third ; only by having recourse to legislative devices did the Catholic MPS secure some scanty State subsidies for the voluntary schools, by which they only just manage to survive. However the idea of a complete settlement by a unification of the school environment is making some progress in intellectual and political circles.

Certain significant attitudes were struck in the months following the liberation. In his speech at the beginning of the University year in Catholic Institute of Toulouse, 6th November 1945, its distinguished rector, Mgr Bruno de Solages, dealing with the question of *Science and Beliefs in Teaching* spoke strongly against Government monopoly of the schools; but, at the same time, he considered that the proportional allocation to schools, impracticable under present political circumstances, would not solve the fundamental problem of the place of religion in national education, and he preferred the solution of a "pluralist national system."

"On the one hand", he pointed out, "*the bonds uniting public education to the State should be lengthened so as to bring it closer to the people: and, on the other, the voluntary system should be inserted into the new national education.*"

A short time after, M. Henri Chatreix, a teacher in the lay schools, produced a remarkable book: *Au delà du laïcisme*<sup>3</sup> under the auspices of the review *Esprit*. In this book, whose very title shows a desire to rise above old conflicts, the author advocated a "national school" which should give up "*setting itself the sterile and outmoded question: What should be the philosophical content of secularism? and ask instead: What does the word 'Nation' imply?*" With a sense of national community, a national school system should acknowledge without prejudice all shades of moral, spiritual and religious values, so that Christian families should have no reason for keeping their children out of the State school.

We might also quote, as pertinent to the question from various points of view, *Les étudiants et la réforme de l'Université* by J. J. Ribas,<sup>4</sup> a document of Action Populaire on *Les débats autour de l'École*<sup>5</sup> and a notable article by J. Gérard in the *Vie Intellectuelle* (February 1946) on *Éducation chrétienne et laïcisme scolaire*.

In July 1946 at the thirty-third session of the Semaines Sociales de France which took place at Strasburg and dealt with the subject of National Community, I was honoured to give a lecture on the theme: *L'école au service de la communauté nationale*,<sup>6</sup> (The School at the Service of the National Community). Taking some ideas from my book *L'école et la Nation* (The School and the Nation),<sup>7</sup> to which I have recently referred in *La France*

<sup>3</sup> Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1946.

<sup>4</sup> Aux Étudiants de France, 1925.

<sup>5</sup> Spes, 1945.

<sup>6</sup> This lecture is to be found in the Report of the Thirty-Third Session, *La communauté Nationale*, Lyons, Chronique sociale de France, 1946.

<sup>7</sup> Les éditions du Cerf, 1934.

*à la recherche d'une conscience*,<sup>8</sup> I received the applause of a large audience, in which the Catholic élite of the intellectual world and the hierarchy were strongly represented, by my conclusion: "Against the monopoly of the State, in favour of organised national education."

If there seems nothing more to be feared than complete State control of the school, I said, its organisation as a national service, taking the terms 'Nation' and 'State' in their exact meaning, presents quite a different picture. To bring the teaching under State control would result in the complete control of education, that is to say, in the last analysis, to hand over to officials, mouthpieces of a Government's will, the responsibility for forming men. To organise the nation's schools is doubtless to unify them, but it should be done with the collaboration of private initiatives and those who are the natural agents in education without them having to give up any of their natural rights. Thus one can envisage the concentration and coordination of all teaching of kind and degree in a national university, under the authority of which every public or private school will come.

I concede that this university must be under the administrative control of the State, but it will also enjoy a large measure of autonomy in the choice of method and orientation. It would be "national" because non-sponsored by any political party — as is the case with a State monopoly — but founded on the concrete and living reality of the people, on the natural groupings (families, professions, trades unions, students' associations, learned societies, the Church), that is, on "all bodies specially interested and engaged in education." At every stage, these bodies would be represented by councils (councils of the schools at the base, then councils of culture in each academical arera, and at the top, the higher education council) which would guarantee the effective moral control of the school by the nation or, to put it better, would establish contacts between the school environment and the other environments to be found in the national society.

I now use the term school environment because, in such a system, there would be some unification arising out of the existence of an overall plan, a basically uniform training of teachers, a friendly cooperative spirit which would eventually grow in the councils of persons with different religious or philosophical opinions. Meantime spiritual differences of various strata of society and the right to hold private views of one's own would be respected; there would be no forcing to an unnatural unity. There would be allowance for a great variety, within the national university, of schools of different types according to the wishes of those living in different parts of the country and different social surroundings. A settlement

<sup>8</sup> Plon, 1944.

of this kind would be pluralist. Pluralism is not anarchic diversity, an atomisation of society, but a harmonious diversity, the different organs functioning in the unity of a living organism. Scholastic pluralism is the dialectic attempt at reconciling the necessity for unity of national conscience with the spiritual autonomy of societies and people.

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In March/April 1949, the review *Esprit* published a large special issue under the rubric: *Propositions de paix scolaire*. Having been much commented upon and discussed, this number was supplemented in the October issue by a quantity of extracts from correspondence and press articles on the subject of the publication. The October number also contained an excellent article on *Christianisme et laïcité* by MM. Vialatoux et Latreille.

The interest of this number of *Esprit* lies in the fact that it is the result of a minute and exhaustive enquiry made in all the 'milieux' of the scholastic world, and that it gives a very true estimate of the best informed opinion on the question. From the answers evoked and quotations collected (extracts from pastoral letters, religious bulletins, and, on the other side, education journals, etc...) it is clear that good sense is gaining the victory over heated feelings. Scholastic polemics have lost some of their virulence; there has been a mutual exchange of compliments. Many of the secularists have realised that in a country where one in every five families is bleeding itself to ensure their children a Christian education and where the denominational schools still have a million pupils, there can be no question of forcing a positivist education by means of a State monopoly, nor of destroying or absorbing such a large section of the school population. On their side, many Catholics, including members of the hierarchy, cannot see without dismay the growing burden which deflects about ten thousand priests and religious from the charge of souls and which threatens to place Christians outside the national community. Is it not possible to envisage a "laïcisme ouvert" which would make the atmosphere of the national school acceptable to the Christian families and put into practice the formula of a national culture broad enough and definite enough to implement a national education? It does indeed seem a possible eventuality when one takes into account the converging lines of approach.

However, the survey also brings out less favourable indications; for example, as regards the higher primary schools in which the



teachers of the national schools are trained, there is a marked secularist attitude, hostile to Christian values ; a spirit of battle encouraged by the growing weight of marxist opinion. And herein lies a great barrier to appeasement and unification, for Christian families cannot accept a secularism which is far from tolerant of creeds, and is in fact marked by anthropocentric positivism or dialectic materialism, and is a negation of the religious spirit.

As for the solution proposed by *Esprit*, it is on the lines of most of those that have been put forward during the last four years, excluding totalitarian theses ; it suggests a national university, free from State control, self administering, and guaranteeing a public service of education to all. However, on two points, this solution of *Esprit* does not commend itself to the Catholic. First, it only admits education of one type ; all schools must be neutral and secular. Neutral, that is to say, undenominational, but inspired by a positive humanism, taken as the common expression of the national conscience ; secular, in the sense that religious instruction will be excluded, but not to the negation of religious values. In other words, the Christian schools would disappear in favour of a national school of enlightened and liberal standards to which all families, whatever their convictions, would be able to send their children in peace of mind. Religious education, and, generally speaking, moral education in accordance with the particular spirituality of each "milieu", will be freely ensured, in out of school groups or post-school groups, in the boarding schools, in youth movements and of course in the home and Church.

Now this first point lends itself to many criticisms : would not such a system deprive the school of its educative function and confine it to teaching only ? Is it compatible with the principle of liberty, since in fact it denies the right of existence to Church schools ? And is it not dangerous to entrust the training of youth to one single type of school without any sort of competition which would oblige it to rejuvenate its methods, maintain high standards, keep it alert and openminded ? These criticisms are further justified when one takes into consideration the second characteristic of the system, which would deliver control into the hands of tripartite councils, on which there would be a majority of teachers, a minority of parents and public authorities. That is to say that the university, instead of being representative of the nation as a whole in all its complexity, would tend to become an autonomous body of technicians, able to impose their own philosophy on the people, all the more so as all the schools representative of other philosophies would have been eliminated. We must not be put off with fine words :

such a system would set up a monopoly which, though not of the State, would still have many inconveniences and dangers.

To sum up, the principle of the reform suggested by *Esprit* is just. The schools battle is causing civil disturbances, it is wasting power and energy ; State monopoly is an instrument of oppression of conscience. We must find some system which will unify without oppressing, strengthen the national sense without abolishing diversities of thought or initiative. But the suggested solutions only deal with half the problem ; they sacrifice too much to unity, and take away too much from liberty. I myself think we must envisage a more supple diversified system more in keeping with actual conditions. At the very least a section in the national university should be left free, if only to affirm the principle of liberty and secure that the university corps shall not fall a victim to intellectual monolithism and dogmatism.

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In conclusion, I would draw attention to two recent political happenings, which are good indications of the evolution of the problem in France.

At the time of the last ministerial crisis, in November 1949, three party leaders, a socialist, M. Jules Moch, a radical, M. René Mayer, and a Christian democrat, M. Georges Bidault, all named as possible presidents of the Council, had to define their political standpoint before Parliament, and each one devoted a paragraph to declaring their opinion on the schools question. Here is M. Moch's statement :

One day, as men of good will we must come together to discuss the problems set by secularism since the beginning of the century, and reach a definitive entente by mutual concessions... That will be enough, I think, to show you in what spirit I regard this problem. Besides when by one's family attachments one is allied to a religion whose members have for two thousand years suffered martyrdom for their faith, one becomes strongly in favour of liberty for all creeds.

M. René Mayer :

The extent of the problems awaiting us call for a unity which implies a considerable regrouping of Frenchmen who love liberty, all liberties, whether that of conscience of which secularism is the expression, or religious liberty the effective exercise of which has set the serious problems which we now find in the teaching world.

And finally M. Georges Bidault :

Regarding the question of education, the Assembly has received the

statements of M. Jules Moch and M. René Mayer with favour. Sharing their hopes, I desire and call for a solution of the schools' problem, definitely accepted with respect for the liberty of all consciences and for intangibility of the State.

These three declarations are remarkably unanimous in that, on the one hand, they reflect the desire for an issue out of the present impasse and for a statute of education, and, on the other, they recognise that this statute must be inspired by a liberal spirit and a conception of secularism which will not oppress anyone's conscience.

Now for the second incident : On the 18th November, M. Albert Bayet, president of the *Ligue de l'Enseignement* and so the prophet and highpriest of secularism, addressed an open letter in the paper *Franc-Tireur* to those who are responsible in French politics, proposing a truce in the war of the schools and offering Catholics an open discussion on the possibility of nationalisation of education. In the reactions to this letter, one regrets the attitude of some Catholic publicists who have hastened to tax M. Albert Bayet with hypocrisy, and have reproached him with desiring the destruction of Christian education in favour of a secularist monopoly. They did not observe that M. Bayet was not speaking of *state control* but of *nationalisation* and thus took a step towards a thesis acceptable to Catholics, since he was adopting their own vocabulary. Of course a system of this kind connotes serious dangers for Christian teaching : as soon as one admits the necessity for a new statute in which the voluntary school will be part in a public service, and in which the school environments dangerously impenetrable to each other, will mingle, perhaps merge, it is obvious that one accepts implicitly a diminution of liberty for the "free" schools, and that they could not become part of such a whole without taking on new obligations and submitting to controls and perhaps irksome pressure. It is always dangerous to converse with one's adversary, since one must always cede something to him, but is it possible to continue for ever in a refusal to talk ? Sooner or later these talks must take place and the wise and straightforward policy for Christians is surely not to raise the scare of monopoly when the others are speaking of nationalisation : this is to draw from the concept of nationalisation all its consequences, which are not a state monopoly, not an instrument of oppression in the hands of a totalitarian government, but a pluralist public service or an organised national education in conformity with the desires and spirit of liberalism. And the outcome of a debate should be to oblige the debater to accept the consequences of his premisses.

# The Crisis of the University in Great Britain

*Reflections on the Book of Sir Walter Moberly :  
« The Crisis of the University »*

by the Rev. J. Davis McCaughey

*Study Secretary of the Student Christian Movement,  
Editor of « The Student Movement. »*<sup>1</sup>

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This is a book which will, for many years give shape to discussions in Britain about the University. We have had remarkably few books of that kind on this subject. In the 19th century we had Cardinal Newman's *The Idea of a University*. Competent judges are speaking of Sir Walter Moberly's *The Crisis in the University* as being of equal importance for us in Britain in the 20th century.

There are points of similarity between the books. For one thing both owe much to the personality and position of the authors. What Newman said had, and has, great interest because Newman said it. Great force is given to many of the statements contained in *The Crisis in the University* when it is remembered that Sir Walter Moberly had been a lecturer in Aberdeen, a don at Oxford, a professor at Birmingham, Principal of University College, Exeter, and Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University, before becoming — 14 years ago — chairman of the University Grants Committee.

This committee has the duty of advising the Treasury about how it might help the Universities by grants of money. The committee itself consists en-

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<sup>1</sup> After reading English literature at Cambridge, the Rev. J. Davis McCaughey studied theology in Belfast and Edinburgh. He is a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. From the Summer of 1946, he has been working in London where he is one of the Secretaries of the «Student Christian Movement» of Great Britain and Ireland. He also edits the review *The Student Movement*. — Address: Annandale, North End Road, Golders Green, London, N. W. 11, ENGLAND (Editor's note).



tirely of University people. So in Sir Walter Moberly, we have the leading University administrator of this country — someone whose contact with the Universities of Great Britain has been unusually intimate and thorough. Further, he has held his present position during a period of swift change and of unprecedented expansion. In the autumn of 1949 Sir Walter Moberly completed his term of office as Chairman of the University Grants Committee, and began his duties as Principal of St. Catherine's, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor. This recent foundation exists to help Christians and others to undertake some of the fundamentally important thinking for which Sir Walter asks in this book.

A second obvious similarity is that both books are written from an avowedly Christian point of view. In his Preface Sir Walter comments: "with the solitary exception of Mr. Arnold Nash's deliberately provocative and challenging *The University in the Modern World*, I know of no substantial recent work which deals with the university to-day from a Christian standpoint." But this does not mean that Sir Walter's is a lonely voice. In spite, or perhaps in part because of the disturbance of war, the past ten years have been full of questionings about the *raison d'être* of the universities; and there has been a growing volume of criticism and concern from Christian thinkers. In 1939 there appeared a little book entitled *Blind Guides?* by David Paton, a young Oxford graduate of two or three years standing who had been working as secretary of the Student Christian Movement in the University of Birmingham. This book, with the sub-title "a student looks at the University" was a very human document describing what happens to young men and women, and to their faith (if any), when thrown into the impersonal, directionless community of the University to-day. The University does little or nothing to arrest, and much to aggravate the triviality in personal and social relationships and the superficiality of thought which the student of to-day shares with his contemporaries outside the universities. In 1943 Mr. Arnold Nash's *The University and the Modern World* was published in New York; and a few copies of this work had an immediate effect on the thought of a number of influential individuals in this country. The book became more widely known on the publication of a British edition in 1945. Here was a disturbing investigation of the failure of the traditional 'liberal-humanist' University to withstand penetration by Fascist and Marxist ideologies, and a searching criticism of the underlying philosophy (more often than not, implicit) of the Anglo-Saxon universities.

Meanwhile discussion was taking place in ever-widening circles

among senior and junior members of the Universities, and among many not directly responsible for University teaching or administration but who cared for their well-being. Late in 1943, the Student Christian Movement began to look forward to the day when the Universities of Britain would be filled to overflowing with ex-service students. It realized that, in pursuing its traditional task of calling Christians to their vocation as students and students to their vocation as children of God, it must take account as never before of "the structure and character of the university itself as it impinges upon student life." It therefore invited a number of senior members of the Universities to act as a Commission "to consider the fundamental pre-suppositions of university and their implications for the work of the S. C. M. in the post-war university." The members of the commission were drawn from the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Durham, Newcastle, Sheffield, Oxford, Reading and London; and the group included natural and social scientists, philosophers, theologians and historians. By the summer of 1946 the group was able to publish a series of twelve pamphlets, setting out some of the main issues of principle. The editor of the pamphlets was able to assert: "certain points of broad agreement emerged in respect of (a) a criticism of the philosophy underlying modern university education; (b) the Christian reasons for supporting and defending with vigour a 'free' or 'liberal' university; (c) the essential beliefs necessary to maintain such a university; (d) the responsibilities of a Christian student in such a university. In addition, a certain number of related questions — such as the place of 'vocational' training and of a faculty of theology in the university — were dealt with."

About this same time the Christian Frontier Council, a body of lay Christians who try to work out the obedience of the Christian in lay callings and of whom Sir Walter Moberly was chairman, turned their attention to similar questions. This body, along with the Student Christian Movement, convened a varied group of about 40 University teachers and administrators to review the positions taken up in the pamphlets; and as a result of this conference Sir Walter Moberly was prevailed upon to write a book which while representing his own opinions would reflect the thought and convictions of a much wider group of University people who share the Christian faith. Just before the book was published, in January 1949, a group of over 100 senior members of the universities (who had been given advance copies) met to discuss its main positions with each other and with the author. Very largely as a result of the

interest aroused by all this activity culminating in the publication of Sir Walter's book, senior members of the University are to be found in many centres who are meeting regularly for discussion, and sometimes for prayer. Not all the members of all these groups would call themselves Christian. But there is widespread among senior members a new self-consciousness about their responsibilities in the University, and of the University in society and in the cultural crisis of our age ; and among Christians there is apparent a fresh determination to bring to the discussion of these matters and to obedience in this sphere the insights of Christian faith.

*The Crisis in the University* is a substantial book of about 120,000 words ; and a summary is likely to be misleading. It is perhaps, however, desirable to try to state briefly — even at risk of caricature — some of the main positions taken by Sir Walter and others.

First, the analysis : the judgment passed is that the Universities as a whole, whatever may be said of exceptional individuals within them, are without convictions and shirk fundamental questions. To quote Sir Walter :

A university can train a student to be a chemist or a linguist. But what he should do with his chemistry or languages when he has acquired them, whether and why injustice and cruelty and fraud are bad and their opposites are good, whether faith in God is a snare and a delusion or is the only basis on which human life can be lived without disaster — all these things the student must find out for himself as best he may, for a university education can do nothing to help him.

This concentration on what is secondary, and neglect of what is of primary importance, has a variety of causes. There is timidity in the treatment of contentious issues, especially in politics or religion : it is no doubt one of the limitations of the national temperament to experience a certain embarrassment, not to say resentment, on being pressed in such matters. Further a proper academic detachment, or fairmindedness has deteriorated into a false neutrality : academic people, perhaps more than most (or with less excuse than most), have thought that neutrality on great spiritual and moral issues is possible. Yet each side of the dominical paradox, *He that is not with me is against me* and *He that is not against us is for us*, shows this assumption to be an illusion. In actual fact, the most detached and unprejudiced among us have uncriticized pre-suppositions derived from the Zeitgeist or other source. Sir

Walter here draws attention to an excellent example given by Mr. C. S. Lewis at the beginning of his Riddell Lectures, *The Abolition of Man*. There Mr. Lewis examines the uncriticized assumptions of the writers of a school text-book on English Literature. The assumption is that judgments of value are subjective and therefore unimportant. The pernicious thing is that this assumption is planted in the schoolboy's mind not as a theory but as an assumption "which ten years hence, its origin forgotten and its presence unconscious, will condition him to take one side in a controversy which he has never recognized as a controversy at all."

These and other factors — for instance, the constant pressure in modern life to master the 'know-how' rather than face the question 'what for?' — have a devastating effect on students.

Most students go through our universities without ever having been forced to exercise their minds on the issues which are really momentous. Under the guise of academic neutrality they are subtly conditioned to unthinking acquiescence in the social and political *statu quo* and in a secularism on which they have never seriously reflected. They are not incited to disentangle and examine critically the assumptions and emotional attitudes underlying the particular studies they pursue, the profession for which they are preparing, the ethical judgments they are accustomed to make, and the political or religious convictions they hold.

Fundamentally they are uneducated.

Turning from diagnosis to prescription Sir Walter first examines what he calls 'spurious remedies'. He makes it clear that he regards many of those who put forward these remedies as in an important respect his allies, for they have seen that there is something fundamentally wrong. He examines Scientific Humanism, Classical Humanism *and* the cry that we must go back to the Christian tradition. All of these, as a Christian, he rejects. He does not want any special positions for Christians. He does not believe that it is either practicable or desirable "to make the Christian religion the basis and foundation of the whole curriculum." What the Christian must work for is the renewal of a genuinely free University, one in which there really is an open forum for the discussion of fundamental questions, in which men acknowledge the pre-suppositions from which they are working, and accept the conclusions to which enquiry leads. He wants more meeting of mind with mind and person with person. He wants the University to become a place where the community passes on to its ablest younger members those values by which it would have them live, but yet does so in such a way that



they learn to criticize those values and reformulate them in ways which are full of meaning for a new day.

It will be seen then that Sir Walter does not want a University under Christian control. The University must do its own job, just as the State must do its job, free from ecclesiastical or theological control. But that does not mean that the University, any more than the State, can be neutral on moral or spiritual issues. We must work our way out of a colourless negative view into a positive conception of what the free society stands for.

All sorts of questions are raised by this conclusion, and are recognized by Sir Walter. How far is there a Christian ingredient in the basic values for which the Universities must stand? Sir Walter thinks that undoubtedly there is: the values are the product of a society that has been Christianized. But many others will now acknowledge them. Yet it is doubtful, in Sir Walter's view, whether these values will be enriched and adhered to with compelling loyalty unless there is a release of spiritual energy and political wisdom such as Christians could bring if they were to hear the command of God for obedience in the place of their work, the sphere of culture, the life of the University.

Sir Walter Moberly's book can here be seen to have affinities to that of a number of other thinkers who have been influential among Christian, and near-Christian, intellectuals in Britain in the past 15 years. He takes up the challenge of Karl Mannheim, who in his 'war-time essays of a sociologist' published in 1943 under the title *Diagnosis of Our Time* asserted "that a new social order cannot be brought about simply by a more skilful and human handling of the new social techniques — it needs the guidance by the spirit, which is more than a system of decision on technical issues." Asserting that "our democracy has to become militant if it is to survive," he asks that it should have "the courage to agree on some basic values which are acceptable to everybody who shares the traditions of Western civilization." He ends his book with a prolonged plea to Christian thinkers to provide the basis for the acceptance of such values. Again, Sir Walter is clearly much aided by the distinctions made by Mr. T. S. Eliot in his *The Idea of a Christian Society*, published in 1939. In Britain we have to-day a society and a culture "which is mainly negative, but which, as far as it is positive, is still Christian." The imagination and outlook of the British people have been Christianized: in this secondary and debased sense we may be said to have had a Christian society which has not yet disappeared or capitulated to any positive alternative. So too

with the Universities, they have not yet capitulated to any other positive creed : there is yet time for 'the society of Christians' to act as a creative minority restoring to the University those conditions and values on which the survival of its freedom depends. Thirdly, it will be seen how close all this is to the thought of M. Jacques Maritain. Indeed Sir Walter quotes some 12 times from his *True Humanism*, and in describing the University as he would have it, makes use of a notable phrase of Maritain : it will be "secularly and not consecrationally Christian."

Given such a conclusion the question must be faced : if the University is to stand for certain things, what is the status in it of the men who cannot conscientiously stand for these things ? To this question Sir Walter gives most careful attention. He rejects the suggestion that such a positive view of the University's function can be secured by legislation : he would have us be moved by conviction, for there are things which you cannot secure by compulsion without destroying them. In any case, the real menace at the moment is the man who is indifferent, not the men of conscientious objection.

The last part of the book is given up to a discussion of what all this might mean for the Studies which are pursued in the University, for its corporate life, for the relation of the University to the State and the general life of the community. And the book ends with a strong challenge to Christians.

Two points stand out : the first is the astonishing and unusual combination of philosophical wisdom and practical suggestion. This is the book of a man of affairs who has never ceased to reflect on the fundamental implications of the work to which he has laid his hand. Sir Walter Moberly has practiced what he preaches.

Secondly the book contains a double challenge. On the one hand it is addressed to the British Universities : they are invited to choose between a policy of drift and one which takes seriously the things which many would like to stand for if someone could only help them to articulate them. On the other hand it is a call to Christians in the Universities, to live their academic lives in the faith which they hold dear in their private lives. The greatest single contribution of Christians to the renewal of the University would be a serious grappling with the implications for a Christian of being a man of science, historian, philosopher and so on. He above all men must not choke back the fundamental question.

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# Towards Greater Freedom for Schools in Germany

by Paul WESTHOFF, LL. B.

*Jurist to the Archbishop of Cologne, Germany*<sup>1</sup>

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The Constitution makers of Bonn have recently given greater importance and opened new possibilities to the principle of freedom in education, without sacrificing the State's control over national education. This fact, showing a further development upon the Prussian constitution of 1850 and that of Weimar (1919), merits the attention of all interested in schools legislation. We will therefore attempt to describe its history and significance.

## I. THE SCHOOL LAW IN GENERAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

A few preliminary remarks as to the law relating to schools in Germany and on religious teaching in them are necessary.

Germany is made up today of several territories, some of which correspond to the old divisions of the Reich, while others are of recent formation. All enjoy "cultural sovereignty," that is to say that they are autonomous as regards cultural matters, and these include questions concerning *Church* and *schools*. The "Bund" has no authority to interfere, only a supervisory right to see that the fundamental rights laid down by the Bonn Constitution are respected.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Paul Westhoff (born 1901) was juridical adviser to the "Zentrale der katholischen Schulorganisation Deutschlands" until its dissolution by the Nazis. Since 1936, he has been jurist to the archbishop of Cologne. Entrusted with questions relating to legislation for schools. Director of the "Bischöfliche Zentral für die (weiblichen) Ordensschule" in Germany.

In 1936 published *Verfassungsrecht der deutschen Schule* (Constitutional law relating to German schools) a book still of value. Wide specialist activities. In 1949, a member of the juridical Commission and of the chief Commission at the Schools Congress of Rhineland/Westphalia. — Address: Niehlerstr. 367, 'Köln, GERMANY (Editor's note).

In a number of German States, including Prussia and Bavaria, the official *primary* schools have always being organised *on a confessional basis*. This remains unchanged in the newly created States made out of the old ones, even in those made by the dismemberment of Prussia. The interconfessional primary school is an exception. On the contrary, in the old territories of Hesse, in Nassau and juridically in Baden, the primary schools are in theory interconfessional. However, the pupils who attend these schools actually belong to a denomination, in Baden for example.

As regards *secondary* schools, the official establishments are in principle, interconfessional. In some regions (Westphalia, Rhineland, Bavaria), many are under either Catholic or Protestant influence, and are, in fact, confessional, owing to tradition, the will of the founder, the teaching staff, or to the religion of the pupils. Besides the national schools, there are a great number of unprovided schools which have been founded all over Germany by all denominations. These are the *private schools* of middle grade (*Mittelschulen*) and secondary (*Höhere Schulen*).

The *professional* schools (*Berufsschulen*) are *interconfessional*: Catholics and Protestants however attempt to introduce a Christian spirit into these institutions which are so strongly under the influence of a Liberal view of industry and commerce. Their efforts to make religion recognised as a subject are now being implemented by article 7 of the Bonn Constitution.

In all the schools, whether denominational or not,<sup>2</sup> religious instruction ranks as an *ordinary subject* in the curriculum. All the pupils must take it unless their parents are opposed and ask for them to be dispensed. Such dispensations are seldom asked for by the Catholics, even in the professional schools where religious instruction is only now being organised.

Clearly in the interconfessional schools, the religious courses are distinct.

The religious teachers are nominated or approved by their respective denominations. In the primary schools, the instruction is given either by clergy or by lay teachers. In the secondary and professional schools, it is entrusted by the hierarchy to priests, where these are available.

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<sup>2</sup> The non-confessional or secular school (*die Bekenntnisfreie, weltliche* or *Weltanschauungs-Schule*) in which no religious teaching is given, does not, in fact, exist.



## II. STATE EDUCATION AND « FREE » EDUCATION

The Church very early recognised the importance of schools. Its schools were built before those of the cities and States. And even after these began to interest themselves actively in education, the Church still kept the initiative in various fields: the instruction of girls, boarding schools (so necessary for rural children), schools for the blind, for deaf-mutes, cripples of all kinds, for German minorities abroad. Only humanly speaking, the educative work of the Church is seen to be both useful and even necessary.

When looked at from the religious standpoint, this is true to a much greater extent. It is obvious that Christian communities or Religious Orders seek to educate their future members and their followers in as humanist and religious a manner as possible. It is understandable, then, that, where an official school of only one particular denomination exists, parents belonging to another creed desire to establish one of their own.

The same desire is expressed by Protestants and Catholics served only by an interconfessional school.

This last may surprise the reader. Why should the interconfessional establishment not suit both parties? It certainly is described as the "school for all" (*die allgemeine Schule*). As a matter of fact, on the one hand its opposition to the confessional school, and on the other, the need for some *Weltanschauung* of its own have resulted in giving it a "confessional" stamp. Catholic and Protestant teachers have alike drawn attention to the harm done to Faith and consistent training by the atmosphere of the interconfessional school. And so a divergence of views became manifest in the debates preliminary to the Bonn Constitution. Faithful to their materialistic principles, the Socialist fought against confessional schools. The Liberal wing of the teachers naturally came out in favour of the interconfessional ones. But any enlightened Christian can only accept such schools unwillingly. Instruction should not be interconfessional; nor can it be undenominational, as certain parties of the Left, fortunately without avail so far, desire it to be.

## III. EVOLUTION OF GENERAL LEGISLATION

Some people are apt to confuse the interconfessional school with the "State schools". Such identification is likely to worsen the schools question.

Has the German State set itself upon any particular category of schools? Glance at the history of German schools legislation, of which the Bonn Constitution is the latest example.

Before the XVIIIth century, legislation ignored any distinction between public and private schools, all being treated as public.

It is in the XVIIIth century that the State, desirous of playing a leading part in public education, brought its own schools into prominence, gave them certain advantages and privileges, and made them in fact instruments of its own policy. In this way, the idea of an official school became defined and, by contrast, that of the private ones. The State visualised a monopoly of education, as witness this formula of the Prussian Code of 1794: "The schools are State institutions"<sup>3</sup>. It could not have been put in a stronger form, and this principle is the guiding one for the administration of public education down to our day: it survives all decrees, all new Constitutions.

The Prussian Constitution of 1850 granted a partial liberty of instruction; it was never decisive on this point.

In 1919, the Weimar Constitution contributed two important innovations of principle. 1) It established a relation between the fundamental right to liberty and that of groups and individuals to open private schools under certain conditions. Thus the right of setting up a school was recognised as a right belonging to a free man. 2) It distinguished between two kinds of private schools: those which took the place of official establishments, and those which did not. This important distinction has continued and the champions of free education wish to see it established under the name of "semi-official" schools, subsidised according to the services provided. Unfortunately the authorities went no further than the principles laid down in article 147 of the Weimar Constitution. The practical commentaries on which the schools administrations of various States had agreed have never had the force of law, so that the right to establish private schools recognised by the Weimar Constitution has not been made effective.

There are several reasons for this; but the chief is the fact that, in Germany, a Constitution voted for by the Reich is applied in the States by means of their separate legislatures. If the States neglect to legislate to apply certain paragraphs of the Constitutions, those paragraphs remain a dead letter for them.

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<sup>3</sup> In its historical context, this phrase does not assert State monopoly, but that to the State alone belongs the right of supervising all schools. This Constitution recognised private schools.

We now come to the period of *National-Socialism*, which made the question of the monopoly of education a matter of life or death for the régime. The national-socialist State and the Party were implacable against private schools of a confessional or philosophical nature, and those which did not fall into line with the national-socialist ideology were suppressed. This was the fate of *all* private Catholic schools, those of Catholic *religious orders* and the private Catholic primary schools which were so important for the huge *Diaspora* in the North and East of Germany.

Today the reopening of the schools closed by the Hitler régime has been authorised. But alas, the subsidies are too small to admit of rapid reconstruction. We are living in a period of groping and struggling.

The members of the Constituent assembly at Bonn resolved to do a constructive work.

In article 7, the Constitution recognises the free school and lays down juridical norms for its existence, binding on the legislative and administrative departments of the States.

The Constitution guarantees the right to the foundation of private schools. Those which take the place of official establishments ('Ersatzschulen') with an equal value and open to all, have the right to be approved. This approbation will be refused if the teaching staff is incompetent. The local legislative body has no power to impose other conditions. The supervision by the State over these private schools only amounts to seeing that the requisite conditions for approval are existent.

On comparing the Constitutions of Weimar and Bonn, we agree with a report from the faculty of law in Fribourg University that "In spite of agreement in the text, there are important differences between article 7 of Bonn and 147 of Weimar, a difference in the sense of a greater freedom of education." The Weimar Constitution had already recognised the right of opening private schools as a part of freedom; at Bonn, this idea is strengthened by greater precision and more emphatic terms.

Juridically speaking, private teaching is placed on equal footing with the official teaching. The Constitution does not deal with the organisation of official schooling; that is the States' own business in virtue of their cultural and scholastic prerogatives. However, the local authorities are bound to conform to the standards of the Constitution which are common for all Germany. These decree that there must be no monopoly of schools, and they also forbid any measure contrary to the freedom of education recognised by

the Constitution. Finally, we must note that the members are desirous of new conceptions adopted by the Ministry of Education, which is still too much under the influence of the famous principle of 1794: "The school is a State institution."

It is now for the private schools to show that they come up to the standards of the Constitution for approbation.

#### IV. WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE DIFFERENT STATES ?

We have seen the broadmindedness with which the Bonn Constitution was drawn up. What will be the attitude of the various States ? We may view the future with a certain optimism when we consider some facts or plans.

In Wurtemberg-Hohenzollern, the schools law of 1948 has allowed parents the liberty of deciding in favour of a Catholic, Protestant or interconfessional school. The place reserved for denominational schools in the official programme has not therefore been lessened to the profit of interconfessional ones.<sup>4</sup>

As regards the status of free and official schools, a *Report on scholastic reform* sent in 1947 to the Ministry of Culture seems interesting and compatible with the Constitution of Bonn ; it deals at length with approved private schools, with supervision, pedagogical and cultural qualifications of the professors, boarding schools, etc. The right of reconstructed private schools to a subsidy from the government is recognised, as also their equal standing in the eyes of the law with the government schools.

We have lived through the experience of a schools' system in a totalitarian State. If today we desire a return to freedom of education and to a respect for religious or philosophical beliefs, the democratic State must deal with the schools question by taking into account the various opinions held by its nationals. The solution arrived at in Holland merits careful study ; we need not copy it, but it may be a source of inspiration when we consider our own problems.

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<sup>4</sup> Here are the results of the election which took place on the 12 December 1948 : Out of 340,053 votes recorded, 187,679 (55.19 %) were in favour of Catholic confessional schools, 77,897 (23.2 %) in favour of evangelical confessional ones and 73,477 (21.61 %) in favour of Christian interconfessional schools. So confessional schools collected 78.39 % of the votes recorded. The province of Wurtemberg-Hohenzollern contains 1,051,928 inhabitants, of whom 562,367 are Catholics, 466,431 Evangelicals.



There is only one solution of the question which will safeguard the reputation that German education has already made for itself ; we must free it from the fetters of politics. Unity must be guaranteed by adequate State supervision, granted ; but this unity is not arbitrary ; it should reflect the diversities which exist in the nation.

Unless it is to be a totalitarian State, the plurality of confessions and ideologies in the nation must be recognised. The schools must do the same. The school is a State in miniature, a symbol of the realities of life for which its pupils will have to be educated.

It is above all in its educational system that one can see whether order in a State is arbitrarily or respectful of liberty.

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# The Relation of Religion to Public Education in the United States

by Edward B. ROONEY, S. J.

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Many events of the past few years have served to focus the attention of the American people on the relation of religion to public education. From these I have selected for comment two fairly recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court and the present controversy over federal aid to education because in them we have striking examples of the divergence of thought, not only of American educators but also of the public in general, of our judiciary, and of our Congress on the role that religion should play in the public school.

To understand such divergence of thought on such a fundamental issue as the relationship of religion and education in the United States, it is necessary to understand something of our religious and educational history. Space will permit only the briefest possible sketch of these fairly broad fields.

The United States of America became a reality when the thirteen original colonies ratified the Constitution in 1789. To expedite the ratification of the Constitution, the settlement of certain controversial and more complicated issues was deferred and the decisions on them were incorporated in a series of ten amendments that have come to be known as the Bill of Rights. The first of these amend-

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ments to the Constitution states : " Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Nine of the thirteen American colonies actually had established churches. This amendment effectively precluded the possibility of an "established national church" but it left the states free in the matter. As the years passed, the various states did away with their established churches. The Fourteenth Amendment was passed in 1868 and has since been interpreted as extending to the states the constitutional provisions against restriction of religious liberty. Thus was adopted in the United States the principle of the separation of church and state in the sense that neither our national government nor state governments could "establish" one church as *the* church either of the nation as a whole or of any individual state. We shall see later how this principle of the separation of church and state was in our time to be extended far beyond its original meaning.

A brief glance at the history of American education reveals the fact that up to the early 1800s, all educational institutions were "private" and were, for the most part, owned and controlled by the various religious denominations. In them, the doctrines of the particular denominations were taught to all students. The same was true for the early American colleges. In fact, one of the first purposes of these was to prepare young men for the ministry. With the growth of population, the private academies became inadequate to meet the educational needs of the country and the "public school" came into being ; so, too, did the state college and university. There was bitter strife over the question of teaching religion in these schools. A complicating element was the very multiplicity of Christian sects. This was true even in states that had an "established church." The battle to settle this problem reached its peak at the time when Horace Mann was Secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Education. His solution was that the public school was to be non-sectarian, that is to say, that the public school was to be public in the sense that it was to be owned and operated by the state or municipality ; that it was to be under the control of no individual sect ; and that the doctrines of no individual sect were to form part of the obligatory curriculum of the schools. Horace Mann was not opposed to the teaching of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion in the schools : what he opposed was sectarian control and sectarian teaching or, if you like, an "established religion" in any school.

But what were the "fundamental doctrines" common to the

various sects? No agreement could be reached and gradually "non-sectarian" came to mean "non-religious" or the exclusion of all or any religious teaching from the public school.

While the immediate cause, or, more correctly, the occasion of the exclusion of religious teaching from the public school was the sectarian differences of the American people, the almost complete secularization of American education that resulted was possible only because secularism was invading the American mind. The public school, in turn, was to contribute largely to the spread of secularism and its denial of the relevance of religion to life, to all spheres and phases of American life.

There is little need to dwell upon the secularization of American life in general. It is but the counterpart of what was happening in Europe in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. So deeply was early American thinking affected by, and infected with the results of post-Reformation and Enlightenment philosophic ideas that one is surprised at the religious tone of the American Constitution and at some of the writings of the Founding Fathers. Such a religious tone is surely more an echo of the dualism of the past than of the monistic-materialism and the secularism that were the order of the day even as early as 1789. That a century and more of secularism has had its effect can be seen only too clearly in the attitudes revealed in recent controversies connected with religion and American education. Yet, that there is still room for a controversy indicates that there are those who have kept the faith and who still place a high value on religion. It is only in the light of this survival of the faith in the midst of an all-pervading secularism that the present controversies in America can be understood. To return, then, to some of the events which high-light the present struggle.

## I

On February 10, 1947, the Supreme Court upheld by a vote of five to four the constitutionality of a New Jersey State law authorizing reimbursement to parents for bus transportation of pupils to public and parochial schools where school buses were not provided. The case, known as the *Everson Case*<sup>1</sup>, had been brought to the Supreme Court by Arch Everson of Ewing Township, who claimed that such payments were contrary to the Constitution.

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<sup>1</sup> *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U. S. 1 (1947).



The obiter dicta both of the majority opinion upholding the law and of the dissenting minority indulged in comments and observations that place a new and expanding meaning on the First Amendment, and one that is positively dangerous for religious education. Thus, Justice Black, speaking for the majority and using the example of a particular dispute in Virginia to throw light (a false light !) on the meaning of the Amendment, says :

...The people there [Virginia] as elsewhere, reached the conviction that individual religious liberty could be achieved best under a government which was stripped of all power to tax, to support, or otherwise to assist any or all religions, or to interfere with the activities of any religious individual or group.<sup>3</sup>

In the concluding paragraphs of the majority opinion, we find a shocking example of judicial interpretation of the fundamental law of the land in a manner that neither the words of the Amendment nor its history can substantiate :

The 'establishment of a religion' clause of the First Amendment means at least this : Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another... No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the Federal Government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect 'a wall of separation between Church and State.'<sup>4</sup>

In his dissenting opinion, Justice Jackson contributes a few gems to a new history of American education :

Our public school, if not a product of Protestantism, at least is more consistent with it than with the Catholic culture and scheme of values. It is a relatively recent development dating from about 1840. It is organized on the premise that secular education can be isolated from all religious teaching so that the school can inculcate all needed temporal knowledge and also maintain a strict and lofty neutrality as to religion. The assumption is that after the individual has been instructed in worldly wisdom he will

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<sup>3</sup> *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U. S. 1 (1947) as reported in *The United States Law Week*, Section 4, Vol. 15, No 31, Feb. 11, 1947, p. 4226.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4228.

be better fitted to choose his religion. Whether such a disjunction is possible, and if possible whether it is wise, are questions I need not try to answer.<sup>5</sup>

And here Justice Jackson joins Justice Rutledge, another member of the dissenting minority, in a new philosophy of American education :

...There is no answer to the proposition more fully expounded by Mr. Justice Rutledge that the effect of the religious freedom Amendment to our Constitution was to take every form of propagation of religion out of the realm of things which could directly or indirectly be made public business and thereby be supported in whole or in part at taxpayers' expense. That is a difference which the Constitution sets up between religion and almost every other subject matter of legislation, a difference which goes to the very root of religious freedom and which the Court is overlooking today. This freedom was first in the Bill of Rights because it was first in the forefathers' minds ; it was set forth in absolute terms, and its strength is its rigidity.<sup>6</sup>

In Justice Rutledge's own opinion, we read the following :

...But the object [of the Amendment] was broader than separating church and state in this narrow sense [of prohibiting an "established church"]. It was to create a complete and permanent separation of the spheres of religious activity and civil authority by comprehensively forbidding every form of public aid or support for religion.<sup>7</sup>

Later he makes his opinion stronger still :

In view of this history no further proof is needed that the Amendment forbids any appropriation, large or small, from public funds to aid or support any and all religious exercises. But if more were called for, the debates in the First Congress and this Court's consistent expressions, whenever it has touched on the matter directly, supply it.<sup>8</sup>

...Hence today, apart from efforts to inject religious training or exercises and sectarian issues into the public schools, the only serious surviving threat to maintaining that complete and permanent separation of religion and civil power which the First Amendment commands is through use of the taxing power to support religion, religious establishments, or establishments having a religious foundation whatever their form or special religious function.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4230.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4231.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4232.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4235.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4236.

So as to make it perfectly clear why he rejects the New Jersey Bus Law, Justice Rutledge lays down this interpretation of our Constitution :

...Legislatures are free to make, and courts to sustain, appropriations only when it can be found that in fact they do not aid, promote, encourage or sustain religious teaching or observances, be the amount large or small. No such finding has been or could be made in this case. The Amendment has removed this form of promoting the public welfare from legislative and judicial competence to make a public function.<sup>10</sup>

These opinions and the interpretation they place upon the First Amendment to the American Constitution in the *Everson* decision are of extreme significance. They did not have to wait long to be made use of again by the same Supreme Court. The very principles enunciated by the majority and the minority opinions in the *Everson* case became the basis for the decision in the famous *McCormum* case. A school district in Champaign, Illinois, had entered into an arrangement whereby pupils whose parents requested it were permitted to attend religious instruction classes of thirty or forty-five minutes duration, conducted during school hours, in school classrooms, by outside teachers furnished by a religious council of the various faiths. Attendance records were kept by the public school teachers ; the persons who gave the religious instruction had to have the approval of the school superintendent. The constitutionality of this system was attacked by Mrs. Vashti McCormum, an avowed atheist. The Illinois Supreme Court upheld the legality of the system. The United States Supreme Court, on March 8, 1948, reversed the Illinois court's decision and declared the Champaign system a violation of the Federal Constitution, as being contrary to the principle of the separation of Church and State laid down by the First Amendment and made applicable to the states by the Fourteenth Amendment. In repudiating the Champaign released time system, the Court claimed :

...it falls squarely under the ban of the First Amendment [made applicable to the States by the Fourteenth] as we interpreted it in *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U. S. 1. There we said : " Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. " <sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4239.

<sup>11</sup> *McCormum v. Board of Education*, 333 U. S. 203 (1948).

Further citations might be given from the McCollum decision but they would all come back to this basic interpretation laid upon the Constitution by the Court, according to which neither a state nor the Federal Government may pass a law which aids one religion, aids all religions, or prefers one religion to another.

Space does not permit us to go into a detailed analysis of the Everson and the McCollum cases, although it would be most interesting to do so.<sup>12</sup> Suffice it to say here that the interpretation placed upon the First Amendment by the Supreme Court in the Everson and McCollum cases does violence to history and puts a dark stain on the memory of those who wrote the Amendment. History shows that the First Amendment sought to do two things and only two: first, to prevent the setting up by our Federal Government of an "established church," i. e., a national church; and, second, to guarantee the rights of conscience in the matter of the free exercise of one's religion. In his dissenting opinion, Mr. Justice Reed scores the broad interpretation put upon the First Amendment by the majority. Speaking of the broader meaning attached to the Amendment, he says:

... Passing years, however, have brought about acceptance of a broader meaning, although never until today, I believe, has this Court widened its interpretation to any such degree as holding that recognition of the interest of our nation in religion, through the granting, to qualified representatives of the principal faiths, of opportunity to present religion as an optional, extra-curricular subject during released school time in public school buildings, was equivalent to an establishment of religion.<sup>13</sup>

Having listed a number of ways in which the Federal Government has and does cooperate with religion, Mr. Reed continued:

... When actual church services have always been permitted on government property, the mere use of the school buildings by a non-sectarian group for religious education ought not to be condemned as an establishment of religion. For a non-sectarian organization to give the type of instruction here offered cannot be said to violate our rule as to the establishment of religion by the state. The prohibition of enactments respecting the esta-

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<sup>12</sup> For a brief but thorough discussion of the historical meaning of the First Amendment, I refer the reader to PARSONS, Wilfred, S. J., *The First Freedom*; New-York: Declan S. McMullen Co., Inc., 1948. For a more detailed historical treatment of the First Amendment and also for a discussion of the Everson and the McCollum cases, Cf. O'NEILL, James M., *Religion and Education Under the Constitution*; New-York: Harper and Brothers, 1949.

<sup>13</sup> McCollum v. Board of Education, 333 U. S. 203 (1948).



ishment of religion do not bar every friendly gesture between church and state. It is not an absolute prohibition against every conceivable situation where the two may work together any more than the other provisions of the First Amendment — free speech, free press — are absolutes.<sup>14</sup>

Lest my readers think that I have been hypercritical of our Supreme Court, I would direct their attention to a luminously clear article written for *Thought* by the eminent Protestant authority on Constitutional Law, Mr. Edward S. Corwin. In this article, Mr. Corwin states :

To summarize the argument against the decision in the McCollum case : In the first place the justification for the Court's intervention was most insubstantial. In the second place, the decision is based, as Justice Reed rightly contends, on a 'figure of speech,' the concept of 'a wall of separation between Church and State.' Thirdly, leaving this figure of speech to one side, the decision is seen to stem from an unhistorical conception of what is meant by 'an establishment of religion' in the First Amendment. This historical record shows clearly that the core idea of 'an establishment of religion' comprises the idea of *preference* ; and that any act of public authority favorable to religion in general cannot, without a falsification of history, be brought under the ban of that phrase. Undoubtedly the Court has the right to make history, as it has often done in the past ; but it has no right to *remake* it. ...Finally, the decision is accompanied by opinions and by a mandate which together have created great uncertainty in the minds of government bodies of all public educational institutions...<sup>15</sup>

The 1949 Winter number of the *Law and Contemporary Problems*, published by the School of Law of Duke University, presented a symposium on *Religion and the State*, to which Father John Courtney Murray, S. J., editor of *Theological Studies*, contributed an article entitled "Law or Prepossessions." In this article, Father Murray subjected the Everson and the McCollum cases to the microscope of analysis. What he found confirmed the analysis and the severe conclusions of Professor Corwin.<sup>16</sup>

Naturally, then, American Catholics and all who are interested in seeing religion made an integral part of education have been thoroughly disturbed by the interpretations placed on our Consti-

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> CORWIN, Edward S., "The Supreme Court as National School Board," *Thought*, Vol. XXIII, N° 91 (December 1948), pp. 665-683.

<sup>16</sup> MURRAY, John Courtney, S. J., "Law or Prepossessions?," *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol. 14, N° 1 (Winter, 1949), pp. 23-43.

tution by the Supreme Court of the United States. We are deeply concerned because the decisions in the *Everson* and *McCormick* cases are symptoms of the deep infection of secularism in American life and education. It is bad enough that so many American children are exposed to an education almost completely divorced from religion ; it is far more dangerous when our highest tribunal lends its authority to those who would make secularism the *official* philosophy of American government and education. Is it not a grave indictment of certain colleges and universities that they have produced lawyers who could write opinions such as those expressed in the obiter dicta cited above from the decisions in the *McCormick* and *Everson* cases ? Fortunately, our history, both past and present, offers sufficient evidence that the learned judges of the Supreme Court are out of tune with the vast bulk of Americans. The phrase of our Declaration of Independence, "All men are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights" is still in honor and gives the lie to the completely secularistic outlook of the Justices. We still begin the meetings of our houses of Congress with a prayer ; we still provide chaplains for our Army and Navy and Air Force ; we still have chapels at our naval and military academies ; church-related colleges and universities are still held in honor by our government ; our President still proclaims a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God. All of these might easily disappear were the philosophy of our present Supreme Court to prevail. They would have disappeared long ago were the historical interpretation put upon the First Amendment by our Supreme Court the true one.

Nevertheless, we dare not rely on a false security. That secularistic philosophy of education is making headway in certain circles is clear from the present controversy on federal aid to education. Education in America is not a federal function. Both by tradition and by our Constitution, it belongs to the states and municipalities ; and upon these rests the burden of supporting education. Reliable studies point to a great inequality of educational opportunity in the various states. For over thirty years now a movement has steadily grown for federal assistance to education. The fact that the Federal Government is now taking such vast sums of money from the states in the form of taxes, and thus reducing the power of the states to tax, gives both occasion and plausibility to the growing demand for federal aid.

Probably the vast majority of those who are working for federal aid to education claim that such aid must be restricted to public

schools only. Unfortunately, over two-thirds of our states have constitutional provisions prohibiting the use of public funds for any but public schools. This is a *de facto* situation, to be regretted, perhaps, but, at all events, to be faced. State constitutions do not, of themselves, govern the distribution of federal funds, but the proponents of federal aid, or the majority of them, hold that it is against the federal constitution to aid private and, particularly, denominational schools. Their claims have received tremendous support from the decisions of the Supreme Court in the *Everson* and *McCormack* cases spoken of above.

Whether or not federal aid to education is either necessary or wise is a question which does not concern us here. There are many who are convinced that it would actually be bad for American education and would eventually lead to federal control — which we do not want either for public or private education. Be that as it may, what concerns us here again is the evidence of the philosophy of secularism that constantly appears in the arguments for the restriction of federal aid to public schools. There is in them a sly insinuation that the only real American school is the public school; that a school that teaches religion and teaches other subjects in a religious atmosphere is somehow merely tolerated; that only a secularistic educational atmosphere is truly American. Were funds given to denominational schools, our whole system of public education would be endangered. Only the public school is at once the genuine symbol and the guardian of American unity! In the private school and, particularly, in the denominational school, they see the germ of disunity. The denominational school is a divisive element in American education, separating whole groups of children from their equals and giving them a superiority or an inferiority complex to boot. In his book "*Religion in Public Education*," V. T. Thayer claims for the child:

...the right... to an education in an atmosphere free from discrimination and segregation and the searing effects upon his personality of a sense of difference from his fellows. Once a child crosses the threshold of the public school, this school owes to him the full support of all its resources in becoming one with other children, Americans all, without the handicap of accentuated differences in race, color, creed, or nationality. To emphasize rather than to reconcile these distinctions in the school is to offend against the moral and the educational principles implicit in a democratic education. <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> THAYER, V. T., *Religion in Public Education*; New-York: The Viking Press, 1947; p. 149.

This is only a random sample of the secularistic views of Mr. Thayer. There is scarcely a page of his book that does not reveal the same secularistic antipathy to the denominational school.

I would not wish to imply for a moment that all those who oppose federal aid to private and, especially, denominational schools are of the type of Mr. Thayer. This is not the fact. But it is a fact that from the controversy on federal aid one can easily deduce the depths of the secularistic infection in American education. But such controversies can be good. They may help us to discover infections and to begin applying a remedy. May we not hope that a by-product of the controversy over federal aid and of the shock produced by the McCollum decision will be a deeper study of our own constitutional history and a deeper probing at the roots of our culture. Such study and such probing might result in a better realization of the truth of what Washington said in his *Farewell Address to the American People*, written September 17, 1796 :

Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports... And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure — reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

## II

Our hopes are not unfounded for there are evidences that a healthy ferment is at work, which may serve as an antidote to the poison of secularism. One such evidence can be seen in the large number of books and periodical articles on the subject of religion in education. We cannot, of course, be so naïve as to conclude that all of this literature advocates the restoration of supernatural religion to public education. There are many writers who attach to religion their own secularistic and naturalistic meanings. This is but another proof of the strength of the secularistic movement. Much, however, of current educational literature reveals sound sense.

There are other signs, too, that perhaps the winter of secularism is on the wane, that a second spring may be in the offing. The very fact that a controversy has arisen over releasing public school pupils for a period of religious instruction is a sign that a sufficiently large number of people are concerned over the complete absence of religious instruction in the curriculum of the public school.



Although the "released time" system of giving religious instruction to public school children received a serious set-back by the McCollum decision, the system is still in vigor in many places. In December 1948, less than a year after the McCollum decision, the National Education Association conducted a survey on "The Status of Religious Education in the Public Schools." The results of the survey were published June 1949. It is my own opinion that the study shows signs of definite bias against any program of religious instruction either in public schools or in any way connected with the public school system. Even so, figures given in the study show that "released time programs" are still quite vigorous. Of 2,639 communities replying to the National Education Association questionnaire, 1,621 or 73.2 per cent reported no program of any kind of religious instruction in the public schools; 708 communities or 26.8 per cent reported some kind of a program of released time, varying from religious instruction in the public school classrooms at a particular hour during the school day to a program of simply "releasing" children early on certain days when they freely repair to other places for religious instruction; 310 communities or 11.8 per cent reported having discontinued the program of released time. Of the 109 cities with a population over 100,000, 45.9 per cent reported they had programs of religious instruction. This percentage drops with the decreasing size of the cities.

Similar studies conducted in 1932 and 1940 were restricted to "released time" only and did not include after-school programs of religious instruction for public school children. A comparison of the figures given in those years with the 1948 study reveals that the "released time programs" (strictly understood) have increased from 10.7 per cent in 1932 to 12.8 per cent in 1940 and 25.7 per cent in 1948. Were it not for the McCollum decision, the 1948 figures would have been close to 35 per cent, since of the 310 systems reporting discontinuance of programs in 1948, 52 per cent, or over 150 of them, admitted they had discontinued because of the McCollum decision.

Contrary to the compilers of the National Education Association survey, I see in these statistics a rather hopeful sign that in spite of the secularism of many professional educators and of our Supreme Court judges, there is a growing, healthy reaction to the complete secularism of American education<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately neither space nor the general scope of this article permits an

In November 1946, the Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education published a report entitled "The Relation of Religion to Public Education" <sup>19</sup> giving the results of a study of the principles that should govern any attempt to introduce religion into public education. It is a thought-provoking report and an excellent start on a most perplexing problem. One of the most encouraging aspects of it is the tone of respect, the deep realization of the need of religion, and the forthright rejection of secularism as the philosophy of American education. It is to be hoped that the American Council on Education will follow through on this study.

According to The New York Times, December 8, 1949, Dr. Luther A. Weigle, dean emeritus of Yale Divinity School, speaking before four hundred Protestant church leaders attending a South-eastern interchurch convocation in Atlanta, Georgia, stressed the need for religion in public education. Dr. Weigle is quoted as saying : " that the public school educates children in practically every other sound human interest, except religion." The result of this on children is, according to Dr. Weigle, that " it becomes natural for them to conclude that religion is negligible or unimportant or irrelevant to the real business of life."

The movement to bring God back into education is in perfect keeping with the sanest modern educational thought on the school, the student, and the curriculum. The concept of the American school is more and more taking the community into the sphere of its concern, to the extent that school and community are practically identified. By what logic, it is argued, can the school exclude from its ambit a very large and important aspect of that community ? Since legal restrictions begin only at a preferential treatment of one religion over another, there is no rational basis for the exclusion of religion from public education as a community function.

Viewing the matter from the standpoint of the individual student, we fortify this conclusion. Educators are ever stressing the

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elaboration of specific programs of religious instruction for public school children. If either did, it would be interesting to describe the work of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine which is well organized in practically all of the dioceses of the United States. In the New York Archdiocese alone, under the sponsorship of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, religious instruction is given to over 85,000 children attending public schools.

<sup>19</sup> American Council on Education Studies : Series I-Reports of Committees and Conferences-Number 26 : *The Relation of Religion to Public Education, The Basic Principles* ; Washington, D. C. ; Vol. XI, April 1947.

need for guidance and counseling directed toward the integration of personality. Treatises are written on the causes of frustration and disintegration. Religion, as one of the greatest integrating forces, is essential in the integration of the student's personality.

Again, viewed from the aspect of curriculum, the school is including more and more subjects and is searching for an integrating force to bind them together. Religion, then, as a field of learning, should, on modern suppositions, be included. As an integrating force, it can scarcely be excluded. Hence, the public school should, on modern pedagogical grounds, both revive and encourage religious teaching.

When we come to consider the actual working out of the plan to include religious instruction in public education difficulties arise. We have, on the one hand, the logic forcing the teaching of religion, and, on the other, Constitutional limitations which deny preferential treatment of any particular religious denomination.

The first solution would seem to be a segregation of the major religious groups and the establishment of schools for each.<sup>20</sup> This possibility is ruled out, for the present, because of the great heterogeneity of religious groups in the schools and consequent administrative difficulty in making the split, as well as barriers based on the currently accepted meaning of democracy.

Hence, a compromise must be sought that will satisfy all groups. Several have been suggested, each with its own weaknesses. Apart from any compromise, the teacher in the public school can, negatively, refrain from ridiculing religion, and, positively, induce students to recognize the importance of religion and motivate them toward accepting religion as a vital aspect of their personal, social, and cultural lives. Neutrality in this matter is implicitly an espousal of secularism since it relegates religion to the realm of inconsequential.

Many suggestions have been made regarding the content of a public school religion course. A large and articulate group<sup>21</sup> is

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<sup>20</sup> This, of course, is what Catholics and, to some extent, certain Protestant sects have done. Thus, in 1949 there were 8,318 Catholic elementary schools with 2,435,350 pupils; 2,385 Catholic secondary schools with 508,724 students; 228 Catholic colleges and universities with a total enrollment of 240,048 students. — The Official Catholic Directory, 1949.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. for example, *The Public Schools and Spiritual Values*, Seventh Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, John S. Brubacher (ed.). New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1944. Among the contributors to this volume are Samuel M. Brownell, John F. Childs, William K. Kilpatrick.

satisfied with the teaching of "spiritual values." Democracy is a spiritual idea; cooperation, mutual aid, self-discipline, kindness, and courtesy are spiritual values. These, though commendable, scarcely reach beyond the natural level and can hardly be the sole basis of religious training. To concede the sufficiency of a spiritual ideal or spiritual values in this sense is to negate our stand for religion and would be a direct canonization of the "religion" of naturalism and secularism.

Study of the Bible as a great religious classic and carrier of our cultural heritage comes first on the list of suggestions of truly religious programs. But what Bible? Each his own? If the Bible, why not the Koran? Ours is a Western Culture. Here lies a large and fruitful field for the English teacher.

Worship in some form is suggested; but a program that satisfies all has not yet been drawn up. Granting of academic credit for religion courses is well established. Released time for teaching students their own religion under public school direction was noted above. The celebration of religious holidays needs no comment as it is an accepted practice. The study of the history of religions as an objective field of knowledge is being tried with varied success. Integration of social studies with religion is offered as the most favored suggestion. To show the place and importance of religion in community life, government, industry, labor, and the like, is a great step forward. The same approach can be made to the fields of history, sociology, psychology, economics, philosophy, literature, music, and the fine arts.

While the introduction into public schools of a course embodying the common core religious truths of the Judeo-Christian culture has not been felt to be a satisfactory solution, there may be a place for pursuing further the possibilities of such a proposal. After all, it is not incompatible with any religious belief to posit the existence of a personal God and the relationship of the Fatherhood of God to the brotherhood of man. From this we are led to the existence of a supernatural end, the existence of revelation, and the possibility of supernatural helps either merited or promised. These and many other suggestions have been made as an approach to the problem of religion in public education. That no solution has been reached is not to be wondered at. The effort to meet the problem is in itself a good indication of a renewed interest in an important problem.

Various motives have contributed to a resistance to secularism and to the revival of interest in religious education. As no family



of antiquity and distinction is ashamed of its ancestry, but rather takes justifiable pride in its rightfully acclaimed forbears, so no nation has completely repudiated its antecedents. A brief inquiry into the history, cultural as well as legal, of American backgrounds will shed light on the reasons for current trends in religious education.

American culture, if as young a nation as America can claim the title, is an offshoot of the Western Tradition. Religion has been an essential part of this tradition. Frequently, as in the Middle Ages, religion has been the unifying bond of this culture. Education, which is an instrument of culture, has accordingly been linked in some form or other to religion. The Greek, Hebrew, Roman, Medieval, and Renaissance educator, each in his own way, has held religion to be a part, at least, of the objectives and curriculum of his school.

Focusing on the newest offshoot of the noble tree of Western civilization, we find that the same, and more, can be said of American culture. The quest for religious freedom impelled oppressed peoples to find it on foreign shores. The preparation of ministers of religion was the reason for the establishment of our earliest educational institutions; religious teaching was the accepted fact through the first half of our history. As we said earlier, the Founding Fathers, in formulating the supreme law of our land, the Constitution of the United States, had no intention of excluding religion from American national life and much less from that of the individual states which make up the union. They wished to safeguard liberty of conscience and forbade the establishment of a national church. This, as we have indicated, is the correct meaning of the much controverted subject of "Separation of Church and State." It is the meaning given by the drafters of the Constitution, the whole history of the Presidency, the laws and practice of every state of the union, and the decisions of the Supreme Court down to March 1948 when the private ideology of the Supreme Court Justices overrode all traditional interpretations. Authority, and tradition, and practice prove that we have separation of Church and State. We do not have separation of Religion and State.

I am well aware that this discussion of controversies dealing with religion in public education in the United States is very inadequate. But it may, and I hope, will serve to indicate to readers, especially outside the United States, that American educators are aware of the serious problems that must be faced in a democratic

country, devoted from its birth to the ideals of freedom. I like to believe that many of the erroneous views, pointed out in this article, may be due to an over zealous desire to protect the freedom of which we are so fond in America. Perhaps from the controversies that have arisen over religion in American education our reasoning will be sharpened ; and when emotions are calmed, we may come to a solution that, while compatible with our liberties, will not leave God, the Author of liberty and of justice, out of the picture of American education.

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# Catholic Education in New India

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More than a hundred years ago the British, through a famous "Minute" of Lord Macaulay, decided that the study of the English language and of English literature would be an essential part of the education of Indian Youth. Since Government alone could not cope with the demand for this English education on the part of Indians, they also decided to invite the assistance of private agencies like Christian Missionary bodies as well as Hindu and Muslim organizations to undertake educational work ensuring them liberal financial grants provided they submitted to the academic standards laid down by Government and State Universities. In these denominational schools religion could be taught to the followers of the denomination that maintained the school.

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Protestant schools and colleges however started the system of teaching the Bible to their Hindu and Muslim students also, without serious objection from Government or from parents. Under this "aided system of education" as it is called, Christian institutions of the Primary, High School and University standards multiplied rapidly and achieved very great success by their efficiency and reputation for discipline. To speak only of Catholics, there are actually in India several thousands of primary schools, more than a hundred high schools and about 25 University Colleges, that is, institutions of the University grade and status but affiliated to the State University of the area.

Christian Institutions on the eve of political independence had serious grounds for fearing that this liberty of education would not continue unimpaired under the new conditions. Ideas among Nationalist leaders regarding the right of the State to control education in all its grades, a belief in the efficacy of such control in indoctrinating the youth of the country in the desired political and social ideas, particularly to overcome the evil of "communism" that has dogged the Indian national struggle, suspicions also, among Hindus in general, that Christian institutions were using their educational privileges for unfair proselytization were the chief causes that led to the fears of the Christians. A foretaste of what might be expected from Hindu nationalist leaders was given in the educational struggle of the Christians, in the Indian State of Travancore in the course of the years 1943 and '44. This State has a population of 6 millions of whom about one-third are Christians — Catholics, Jacobites, and Protestants. Education has made great progress in Travancore and this is due mainly to the number and efficiency of Christian institutions. From 1939 the State was ruled, under the Maharajah who had in theory absolute power, by an able and all powerful Dewan or Prime Minister who happened to be staunch Hindu. He was alarmed by the progress of Christians in this Hindu State and he attributed it in good part to Christian schools. He made a strong, subtle, and many sided attempt to gain exclusive Government control of education, and to oblige the Christians to close down their schools. A long and bitter agitation followed. Many nationalist leaders outside the State expressed their approval of the Dewan's ideas. Had he not been a political reactionary, in opposition to the nationalists in other ways, he might have won the educational battle. But he was obliged to resign and the educational struggle ended in a substantial victory for the Christians who were also among the foremost nationalist leaders.



As in Travancore, so on the vaster stage of federal India, Christian Education has gained a very appreciable victory in recent months. The pessimistic predictions have been falsified and the fears of the Christian community have been quieted because the substance of the guarantees they wanted in educational and religious matters have been given to them. After considerable discussion the Constituent Assembly of India has embodied in the new Constitution these guarantees of educational freedom in a series of Fundamental and Minority Rights. This Constitution has now been formally ratified and promulgated on the 26th of January. The educational and minority rights are justiciable rights. In other words, they cannot be violated either by individuals or even by Provincial and Central Governments. Those who deem that they have been violated may appeal to the Supreme Court for redress.

Let us recall the wording of the provisions and analyse them briefly to see all their implications. It is necessary that we should neither minimise their content nor exaggerate their importance. We must know exactly what was intended by the Legislators when they passed them. I number them not as they are in the Constitution but in the order suited to this discussion.

1) All Minorities whether based on Religion or Language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

2) The State shall not in granting aid to educational institutions discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority whether based on religion or language.

3) No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of state funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language, or any of them.

4) No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of state funds.

Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the State, but has been established under any endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.

5) No person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State Funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person, or if such person is a minor his guardian, has given his consent thereto.

The *first thing* to be noted in these educational guarantees is that *the freedom to maintain private schools and the right to secure*

*Government grants for them* is not given to citizens on the basis of their rights as parents to give their children the education which they want but as a guarantee to a minority whose culture needs protection from the majority. Obviously on ethical grounds this is not so satisfactory as the recognition of educational freedom as a fundamental right of all individuals would have been. Nationalist India was committed to a policy of protection and sympathy for the Minorities. It was by such assurances that they hoped to preserve the unity of India and persuade the Muslim minority to remain in the union of India. These assurances did not suffice for the Muslims. They insisted on Partition. As a reaction to this, there was a tendency on the part of the Hindu majority to want to make India a Hindu State with no special guarantees to the other minorities, Muslim, Christian, Sikh. If this had succeeded, I doubt if the educational guarantees herein given would have been included in the constitution. It is to the credit of the nationalist leaders that they remained faithful to their ideal of a secular state with tolerance and protection for all religious minorities, in spite of their failure to reassure the Muslims and preserve the unity of India.

However while minorities have the *right* to conduct their schools, in fact the Hindu majority too has been maintaining a large number of private schools. It is doubtful if they will ever give up this privilege, at least not as long as the minorities keep it. Hence, in practice, the freedom of education will be enjoyed not only by the minorities but by all the citizens of India.

*Clause No. 2* deals with *Government grants to private schools*. It is satisfactory as far as it goes. But it must be noted that no absolute guarantee of grant is given here. All that the Constitution states is that in giving assistance, that is, "if and in so far as the State gives assistance," no discrimination shall be made against Minorities. It is conceivable that the State may give up the entire scheme of "aided education" and withdraw grants from all private institutions. There is nothing to protect the Catholic community against this unless the Supreme Court declares that the liberty to maintain schools implies some degree of state aid, and that without such aid the schools cannot be maintained, and the guarantee would therefore be valueless. It is doubtful if the Minorities can get a decision of this kind.

On the other hand it is certain that the State cannot bear the entire burden of Secondary and University education for a very long time. For practical reasons they will have to ask the continued

help of private agencies. In this case they are likely to continue the grants as long as the necessity for the private schools exists. But again there is no indication of the degree of assistance which will be given. Formerly schools received two-thirds building and equipment grants. Now building grant is not always given and when given it is even less than half. Similarly the "teaching grant" is sometimes cut down considerably on the plea of financial stringency. In such circumstances Catholic schools like other schools will have no option but to raise their fees and finance themselves exclusively from the fees. This will be impossible in the case of primary schools and with poor Catholic children. For these reasons the Catholic community and the Missions may have to bear a heavy financial burden in order to keep up their schools. However, up to now grants to primary schools have been fairly good and in recent years have even been considerably increased.

Another point to be noted (*Clause 3*) is that *where Government assistance is received, admission shall not be denied to any one on grounds of religion*. That means that Catholic schools have the obligation of admitting non-Catholic students if they wish to have grants. In practice this is not a hardship because Catholics do wish to have non-Catholic students as it would not be possible to conduct schools successfully and efficiently with only Catholic students. Moreover, the admission of non-Catholic students is one of the means we have of exercising indirect religious influence on them. This provision, moreover, does not mean that in denominational schools preference should not be given to members of that denomination. The condition would be satisfied by the admission of a small percentage of carefully chosen students.

Let me add that this question of the admission of non-Christian students into our schools has been one of the most debated points in the educational policy of the Church in India. The earliest Christian or Mission schools admitted only Christians. But they realised before long that the schools could not be successfully conducted without admitting non-Christian, chiefly Hindu, students. The Catholic community was poor and not numerous. The admission of Hindu students, bright and eager for the benefits of English education would raise the intellectual and social tone of the institutions. It would increase fee income and, what is more, enable the schools to secure Government grants. The decision was made first by the Jesuit Colleges to open their doors to non-Catholic students. They have had no reason to regret the decision. However, many responsible men have never reconciled

themselves to the idea of numerous zealous missionaries spending their lives in teaching secular sciences to non-Christian students, few of whom became Catholics. There have been, even in recent years, strong efforts to get this policy changed. But today it stands fully justified. It is obvious to everyone that if the Catholic and Protestant Missionary Colleges had not gained devoted friends among the intellectual elite, many of them their former students, who are ruling India today, the whole future of missionary work in India might have been in danger. Hence the provision that admission shall not be refused to any one on grounds of religion even in these denominational Colleges and Schools is not only not hard, but one in conformity with the settled policy of the Church.

We now come to the thorny question of *religious instruction in private and Government schools*. There was a great deal of discussion about this before the provisions were finally settled. Even now there is considerable misunderstanding regarding the motives and implications of some of the provisions. Hence it is worthwhile explaining this aspect of the question very clearly.

On the part of the Hindu leaders there was the determination that the continuance of the aided system and the assistance given to denominational schools should not be made a means for proselytization and that religious instruction in a particular creed should not be imposed on members of other denominations. This opposition to the compulsory teaching of Christian Scriptures had been voiced frequently in earlier years also and even those Protestants who most strongly felt it their duty to teach the Bible had come to recognise that attendance in these classes could only be optional. Catholics, with rare exceptions, did not impose religious instruction on non-Catholics. On the other hand, the Christian leaders and Members of the Assembly were determined to preserve their right to teach religion at least to the adherents of their own faith. In addition to this, most of the Christian Members including all the Catholics were also anxious that no provision in favour of religious instruction should open the way for the State or the parents to ask that their own religion might be taught to their children in private Colleges. This was one of the dangers which we had to face. Catholics could not conscientiously open their buildings and give facility to the teaching of Hinduism and Islam to members of these faiths in their schools. It was to prevent such demands that the Christian members thought it permissible to put up with an extreme form of religious neutrality on the part of the State.



In an earlier draft, a subclause to the provision that there shall be no religious instruction in State schools had stated that the Clause did not prevent members of a particular denomination from making arrangement for religious instruction for their adherents in these State schools outside school hours. This had seemed a very satisfactory arrangement to the Christian members at first. But in the last stage of the discussions, a certain number of Hindu leaders declared themselves against this as it might lead to the disturbance of the friendly atmosphere of the school by members of all religions discussing their tenets in the school, and making statements about each other which would lead to communal tension. Those who know what "communal tension" is in India and the dread with which it is looked upon by all patriotic men, will understand this desire of the Hindu leaders to diminish the possibility of religious animosities in our country. But it is certain that the subclause would have remained in the Constitution if the Christian members had insisted. Realising this, those who opposed the subclause came to the Christian members and pointed out that the maintenance of that subclause would lead followers of other religions to claim the same privilege in Christian State aided Schools also. They knew that this was not acceptable to the Christians, especially to the Catholics. Some of the Protestants said that they were prepared to give that option to non-Christians provided the State schools permitted the teaching of religion. It was a difficult decision to make. Ultimately the majority of the Christian members agreed to the abolition of the subclause and supported the idea of absolute state neutrality in religious matters.

It was the same idea of state neutrality that prevented the Constituent Assembly from saying that religious instruction could be *compulsory* at least for the members of the denomination that conducts the school. The Assembly did not wish to approve the notion of compulsion in religion in any institution aided by the State. But it was made clear that the intention was not to make religious instruction in denominational schools difficult. It was agreed that for members of the denomination there could be no question of "compulsion," in the strict sense. In any case their parents were understood to demand religious instruction for their children by the very fact of their sending them to such schools. In spite of this clause, therefore, Catholic Colleges continue to state in their prospectuses and College regulations that religious instruction is obligatory for Catholic students.

However, it will be noted that circumstances have obliged the Constitution makers to modify and temper this desire for absolute State neutrality. The proviso to clause 4 shows that Government envisages the existence of institutions definitely denominational in tone but conducted by Government. This is a legacy of older times of which Government cannot divest itself. First of all there are professedly Hindu institutions where Hinduism is to be taught in some form or other under the terms of the foundation, institutions conducted by Government in what were formerly Indian States ruled by Hindu Princes. Most of these States have now acceded to the Indian Union but their obligations under the terms of endowment do not cease. They have been accepted by the Central Government. This is a serious modification of State "neutrality." More important still, there are two great denominational Universities founded in what was British India and now administered by the Central Government: the great Hindu University of Benares and the Muslim University of Aligarh. Their denominational character was fixed by a Charter granted by the Government of India in British days and was the condition under which large gifts were made by Hindu and Muslim nobles to these two Universities. The new Government of India has formally accepted these obligations and undertaken to maintain the Universities in so far as the expenses are not covered by endowments — which is very far from being the case — from the funds of the Central Government.

The question has often been asked whether on the model of these Universities, Catholics too could not secure a Charter and establish a purely, Catholic University for the whole of India. This is not the place to discuss this complicated question. It is enough to say here that apart from serious practical difficulties in the way of realising this plan it is doubtful if the Government, strongly wedded at least for the present to "religious neutrality and opposition to Communalism" will ever give a similar Charter to any religious body — Christian, Hindu or Muslim. Moreover the system of having, in various regions, University Colleges affiliated to the State Universities of the region rather than an isolated independent University has, along with obvious disadvantages, certain very valuable advantages which should not be lost sight of.

Lastly a word about religious instruction being given *outside school hours* even in private schools. This too may be interpreted in a large way. Actually it is taught in school hours but during the religious instruction hour the other students are sent home or have ethical instruction against which there is no ruling. Thus in most

Catholic Colleges in the Madras Presidency, Religion is taught during the first school hour on one day when the non-Catholics have their Ethics class and during the last hour on another day when the rest of the College is dismissed. Examinations are held in Religion and prizes and scholarships given on the basis of the marks without any interference from the State. But the marks do not count in the academic record though they may count in the record for conduct.

A final point which may be noted here is the decision of the Constituent Assembly regarding the *European and Anglo-Indian Schools*. None of the Indian Minorities had as much cause as the Anglo-Indian Community to dread the departure of the English and the transfer of power to the Nationalists. They are mainly people of mixed descent though there are a few among them of pure European race long domiciled in India. They have maintained European customs and ways of living and have never considered themselves as Indians. The English treated them with exceptional favour reserving for them posts in certain public departments like the Railways and Telegraphs. They were given a special system of education more in keeping with the English school system and preparing for study in English Universities. Some of the best known Catholic schools in India like St. Joseph's, North Point, are European Schools of this kind. These schools were maintained from public funds and exceptionally generous grants were given to them. Scholarships to Anglo-Indian students were of much higher value than to Indian students owing to their higher European standards of living. The Anglo-Indians for their part gave to the English an unquestioning loyalty and treated the Indian « native » with a sense of superiority of which even the higher English officials were not in general guilty. However, it is fair to add that the national movement touched some even among them. In spite of this the Community anticipated the worst when India became independent. But the Nationalists have shown no spirit of revenge against them. The Constitution guarantees to the Anglo-Indians a continuation of their privileges and of their educational system for a period of ten years by which time they are expected to adjust themselves to new conditions and accept the general educational system of the country. There is among them now a great sense of relief. The Anglo-Indians are about half a million in number dispersed all over India and about three-fifths of them are Catholics. They will now begin to enter in larger numbers the private Christian Schools and Colleges, frequented by the Indian Christians.



From the foregoing it is clear that while the provisions are fair and reassuring in a broad way they do not give entire satisfaction to Catholics. They leave many loopholes which a Government not sympathetic to Catholics might take advantage of. It is possible to remain in theory faithful to the letter of the law, and in practice curtail the freedom of teaching given by it. Actually in the Madras Presidency during the last two years a zealous Hindu Minister of Education, suspicious of the influence and power of Christian, and particularly of Catholic schools, introduced measures claimed to be in the interests of efficiency, but in reality dangerous to Catholic schools. Thus without denying freedom to Catholic managements, Government asked for Advisory Councils in which Hindus could be included, to help the Catholic Managements. Similarly, Managements were asked to deposit fairly large sums of money as guarantee of their financial stability and their ability to pay their part of the Teachers' salaries. Poor Catholic missions are not for the most part capable of depositing these sums. Most dangerous of all, a measure has been passed by which in case recognition is withdrawn for inefficiency or malpractices from a private school, its buildings could be temporarily taken over by Government for continuing the work of that school under Government management. Obviously these measures are not in themselves positively unjust and they affect all private schools, Christian, Hindu, and Muslim. Hence it would be neither just nor prudent to raise the cry of "persecution" because of them. But in practice, under Hindu educational officials, they might be made to operate more harmfully against the minorities than against the others. Against such legislation and administration there is hardly any remedy except for Catholic Indians to gain influence with Government by taking a more active part in public affairs and entering into political organizations which ultimately control the government of the country. In fact, the unpopular Hindu Education Minister was obliged to resign, partly by the pressure of Christian public opinion. The best written constitution might be made useless or harmful if the men who enforce its provisions are ill-disposed. The Catholic community therefore cannot rest on its laurels with the thought that the educational battle has been won by the inclusion of these substantially satisfactory provisions in the Constitution. The battles may have to be fought again and again on a smaller scale and on narrower ground. Freedom of education for Catholics will need, in India as elsewhere, unfailing vigilance based on the knowledge that our adversaries too are equally vigilant and that victory on this front is essential for us.



# Religion in the Japanese State School

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“They are thought to have built Power, but they did not,” says Bertrand de Jouvenel of the totalitarian regimes of the recent past and the present. “The way has been made straight for the conditioning of the minds in childhood by the monopoly, whether more or less complete, of education.”

The remark eminently fits Japan. This highly centralized and efficiently governed State, the only one of its kind outside the Western hemisphere, bases its power principally on the “monopoly of education,” more rather than less complete, even if compared with its most enlightened Western prototypes. There is, as everybody knows, hardly any illiteracy in Japan. It is true that ‘literacy’ in the case of the complicated Sinico-Japanese script does not connote exactly what it means in the West, since it includes both the educated who can read or write the thousands of ideographic characters and the uneducated who manage to get along with the fifty syllabary symbols and a few hundred ideographs. But the very intricacy of the writing system makes its adoption by the entire population an all the more remarkable feat.

Total literacy is the achievement of the omnicompetent Japanese State which was admired for its successful execution of compulsory education by the progressives abroad until it became evident that it had also succeeded in “conditioning minds” on a scale and for ends less savoury to the progressives. The exploits

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of the literate Japanese during the last decade almost seemed to confirm Nietzsche's cynical observation: "Everybody being allowed to read, ruineth in the long run not only writing but also thinking." Japan has furnished one more proof that compulsory education is, in reality, nothing but a State-supported technique of acquisition which turns out harmful unless the vital question is decided to what purposes the acquired technique is to be put. Thus the question of the relevance of religion in education arises, and it does so with particular poignancy in Japan because of the magnitude of State interference in educational matters and of the extensive religious vacuity in modern Japanese civilization.

## I. STATE MONOPOLIZED EDUCATION

Since the early days of the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese State has controlled the education of its subjects through the powerful Ministry of Education, established in 1871. More thoroughly than even the other governmental agencies, the Ministry skilfully combined from the first the elements of a long-acclimatized Chinese mandarine tradition with the bureaucratic expedients of the nineteenth century Western State, notably its Prussian model. There were occasional endeavours to limit its competence in the decades from the early blueprint stage till the period of absolute statism during the Pacific War. But the essential position of the Ministry as sole authority and supreme instance in all school matters never was effectively challenged throughout the period.

One of the most immediate aims which the Occupation Authorities set out to accomplish in the course of their educational reform work after the defeat was to divest the Ministry of its power. The United States Education Mission which stayed in the country for almost a month in 1946 and recommended the principles to be carried out by Occupation Headquarters insisted that the Ministry, rather than being in direct control of local schools, confine its task to providing "technical aid" and "educational counsel," and that prefectural and city administrative agencies, to be elected by popular vote, should be given more power, while the sphere of autonomy of private schools should be respected.

These recommendations have largely been carried out, at least on paper. But they have not weakened the power of the central authority to the extent anticipated. The administrative precincts of the country, artificially carried out in the 'seventies of the last

century somewhat on the model of the French *préfectures*, cannot be compared with the German *Länder* or the States of the American Union. Tokyo sets the tune throughout the country. Prefectural Education Boards turn out to consist of bureaucrats ordered about by their superiors in the capital and of elected party members who faithfully follow the party line decided on at metropolitan headquarters. Little of that "diversification among human communities" is left which Professor Whitehead considers essential for the "Odyssey of the human spirit." A few big dailies with several million subscribers each, 1,800 magazines with 22 million readers, 2,200 cinemas and a State-controlled radio network create the drab uniformity of the industrialized mass State. Cultural, and therefore educational, norms and directives are expected to come from the center, since little regional consciousness and vitality survives.

It is true that the precarious stability of the post-war government deprives the Ministries of much of their former prestige and thus renders many bureaucratic plans and measures ineffective. But while this state of affairs creates, for the moment, the illusion of greater freedom, it may also end once more in the popular cry for more efficiency, hence more control and more centralization. Signs of this "conspiracy of the subjects" to relinquish more and more of their freedom in order to ensure equality and security, a tendency Jouvenel observes in the West, are already apparent in the educational world of Japan. Almost 4,000 heavily damaged school buildings had to be reconstructed, many more had to be extensively repaired, and a number of costly educational innovations, including the extension of compulsory schooling, have been introduced in the course of post-war educational reform policy. As a result, the clamor for help from the "federal chest" has risen as loud as ever, and the Ministry has perforce to stand by, ready and willing for more "technical advice" and "professional counsel" than is good for decentralization.

An increasing number of private schools too are anxious for the governmental obolus, since they find it difficult, in a war-ravaged economy, to comply with the newly imposed standards and regulations and the imperious needs for re-building. The new Private School Law foresees again some of the familiar loopholes for State interference. Nor does the desire for more supervision proceed entirely from malice. The educational standards of many private schools — run as they frequently are for mere commercial interest — is often deplorably low so that, when occasional scandals

are uncovered, public opinion flares up and insists on even more government interference. At any rate, private schools do not signify much in the general educational picture, as the following table shows.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

	Primary		Secondary	
	Schools	Pupils	Schools	Pupils
Public	20.111	10,525,000	26,936	6,346,000
Private	62	21,000	2,678	759,000

The Japanese State controls, therefore, one of the hugest *primary* school systems in the world, with a quarter of a million teachers and more than ten million children. To gauge the significance of this fact, one ought to be able to visualize the vital importance of the elementary school around which not only small rural communities and provincial towns, but even the wards in the big cities are centering. There is no parallel in the Western world to the fervent devotion with which Japanese parents surrender their offspring to the national schools, nor to the indefatigable zeal with which the average schoolmaster looks after his charges that repay him with the most affectionate attachment. The insignificantly few private elementary schools cater, with rare exceptions, for the children of the well-to-do in the larger cities. They are expensive, highly selective, not excluding such schools managed by the Sisters, and are sometimes criticized in public and private with that egalitarian irritability characteristic of an impoverished people.

At first sight the comparative position of State schools appears less preponderant in *secondary* education. But a closer scrutiny of the figures shows the significant fact that the proportion of boys to girls stands as of three to two in public secondary schools, while it is of two to four in private institutions. The proportionate difference was even more marked before co-education was introduced on a large scale four years ago. The greater part of private secondary schools were, in fact, originally established to cater for girls, and that has definitely settled their prestige in the Oriental scheme of values. The girls who can afford it still prefer the gentler and more refined privately run high schools, and especially the mission schools. But with the gradual disappearance of the well-situated bourgeoisie, interest in the equivalent public girls' schools rises appreciably. If a girl wants to stand on her own feet in later life, get a civil service position or a job as a teacher or a nurse, the



public school promises more ; it is also incomparably cheaper, although the entrance requirements are stiff enough. As for the young man, only a few private high schools offer the equivalent of State-sponsored education, although some offer more. That explains the figure of 3.5 million boys in public schools as against 326,000 in private schools of the secondary level. Catholic secondary institutions care for 7,000 boys and 21,500 girls.

Comparative statistics for the *university* level of education are hard to come by and harder still to interpret to the foreign reader. The entire field of higher education is at present in a state of chaotic confusion. The term *daigaku* which hitherto used to represent, although in a much diluted form, the "university" in the Western sense, has come to be depreciated in value since the introduction of a new system after the end of the war. "New-system university" charters are being granted to a great number of former vocational and finishing schools resulting in an inflationary multiplication of "universities." By the end of last year, 180 universities, many of them "junior colleges" and one-faculty institutions, had been newly accredited. Of the 92 newly chartered private universities, four are Catholic (three for women, one co-educational). The student population of these new schools is not yet ascertainable, but it is supposed to be near a quarter of a million. In 1946, before the change, the situation was as follows.

#### MULTIPLE-FACULTY UNIVERSITIES BEFORE 1947

	National ("Imperial")	Private
Universities	7	28
Students	38,487	42,898

The revolutionary changes in the university system will hardly affect the impregnable position of the public universities. The seven National (formerly called "Imperial") universities are still the only exemplars of a "proper" university in the minds of all. They owe their prestige to their brilliant graduate schools where the staff both of their college departments and of their preparatory departments, the twenty-eight "Higher Schools" strategically placed throughout the country, are trained in truly academic discipline. There is no Japanese youngster with even a little ambition who is not dreaming of being admitted to these schools. Here he can study at a nominal fee, under the most famous teachers and with the finest libraries and seminar rooms at his disposal. And when he graduates, careers are open to him that no private univer-

sity, even of the old-established and respected schools, can offer. The national trends in taste and thought are set by their caste, the medical and juridical professions favor their products as do the great engineering and industrial concerns and the research institutes. The entire civil service is their exclusive domain and finally, with several important and powerful Government Normal Schools recently elevated to the status of public universities, they also control the whole of the vast State school system itself, very much on the model of the French *Université*. Indeed, the degree of *gakushi*, conferred by any accredited college and usually translated as "Bachelor," should rather be rendered as *agrégé de l'Université* when bestowed by the National Universities, because of the exclusive privileges it denotes.

Even the old-established private universities (of which four are Protestant, one Catholic) can so little compete with the Big Seven that they depend themselves for their best lecturers and professors on the State universities, since they lack the graduate departments to train their own. An experiment is, however, on the way which it will be interesting to watch since it may well have the widest repercussions on the entire State School system since the establishment of the Ministry of Education. American Protestants are attempting to raise ten million dollars for an International Christian University in Tokyo for which the site and initial buildings as well as the sum of 160 million yen (half a million dollars) have already been contributed by the Japanese. The institution is planned to consist of Graduate schools only. Instruction in the Liberal Arts School is to begin in 1951, and Schools of Education, Social Work and Public Administration are subsequently to be opened. If the project succeeds in setting up the exacting type of Graduate school that makes for prestige and attracts both competent teachers and students, it may well make history. To begin from the top of the educational pyramid in order to reach, through the élite, the mass of the people, that is missionary strategy which would have rejoiced the heart of St. Francis Xavier. It is also wise to concentrate, as is apparently planned, on those departments that are both ideologically most important and financially least expensive. But it remains to be seen whether the plan will succeed and what unity in educational thought the component Christianity of so many differing denominations will produce.

Meanwhile the vast educational edifice of the Japanese State stands unshaken in all the essentials of its structure. It is awe-inspiring enough, but it must not be imagined from the foregoing

as altogether too uncanny an ironclad monster. In the Ministry as well as in the public schools, much sincere soulsearching has been going on for some time, and there are countless well-intentioned civil servants and educators willing for reform if only constructive guidance is forthcoming. At the same time, the happy inconsistencies in the Japanese character and their dislike for too rigid doctrinaire thinking make for compromise. There is plenty of room for good work both within and without the State school system, and there was never more than at the present moment.

## II. SECULARISM IN THE SCHOOLS

What is the place reserved to religion in the vast net of State controlled Japanese schools? The answer is that religion counts for as little in education as it does in the State machinery itself, and that the Japanese *État laïque* is a faithful reflection of the modern Japanese civilization which, as a result both of its indigenous development and of its encounter with the modern West, is thoroughly secularized.

"The spiritual neutrality or vacuity of Western civilization have become evident," Christopher Dawson has recently written, "since it can be taken over *en bloc* by any State which is able to train specialists and buy machinery and equipment, as Japan has done in the last sixty years." But the rapid and efficient absorption by modern Japan of the outward apparatus of our culture has manifested more. By handling like so much merchandise the imported institutions and techniques from the West, Japan has not only demonstrated the hollowness of our contemporary culture; she has also proved the lack of a spiritual tradition and continuity in her own civilization. The question of the moral assumptions from which the Western order must have sprung was never raised by the Meiji reformers for the simple reason that their own thinking had become as pragmatic and utilitarian as that of the merchants, engineers, diplomats and educators at whose feet they eagerly studied in the last century. When the first foreign emissaries arrived at the shores of the country, Japan had, after centuries' old seclusion, concluded a process of secularization similar in development and in result to the evolution the West has undergone since the days of the Renaissance. The brief flowering of the Christianity transplanted at that time by St. Francis Xavier had been cruelly interrupted for the same *raisons d'état* for which the preponderance of Buddhism was also broken. Religion counted for little in the

urban society of the latter-day shogunate, and it did not seem to mean much more in the Western world with which contact was then renewed. But while an originally Christian humanitarianism still inspired much Western thought, Japanese religion had long ceased even indirectly to be culturally fertile. The problem of religion in the school did not arise, because religion was not assumed to play any role at all in the culture of a nation. It belonged, as one of the makers of modern Japan, Marquis Ito, remarked, "to the hallowed groves of the shrines and temples; it is a nuisance in the market place."

The liberal reformers of the new Japan foresaw the ultimate consequences of their merely technical and material progress as little as did their enlightened masters in the West. They overlooked in the fever of their modernization schemes that they were creating further voids in the fabric of society which uncanny forces would attempt to fill when the inevitable moment of crisis would come to their optimistic planning. The moment came with the political and economic deadlock of the 'thirties.' If the religious cult of laicist statism took the place of the missing Absolute in Japan with greater rapidity and vehemence than elsewhere, the reason is that the spiritual vacuum was greater in this country and the process of secularization further advanced. It is a wrong reading of history to assume that the militarism of yesterday consisted in the resurgence of an indigenous reactionary feudalism never properly extinct, or in the revival of beliefs in ancient Shinto mythologies which had always been dormant. Far from not being enlightened enough, the Japanese were "enlightened" to the point of discarding any moral standard of an older tradition. Far from being reactionary, they turned out to be the most progressive planners in all Asia. They were so modern as to be the first modern nation to proclaim the religion of the Total State.

The public school system proved to be the ideal setting for the penetration of the new cult, and the government-appointed military instructors saw to its enforcement in private schools as well, after the teaching of any kind of denominational creed in any kind of school had definitely been prohibited. It is true that, upon an official *démarche* of the Apostolic Delegate in 1933, the Ministry of Education officially denied the religious character of the compulsory pilgrimages to Shinto shrines, the solemn exposition of the Holy Image of the Emperor at school convocations or the obligatory morning devotions with heads reverentially bowed to the August Abode. But it is equally true that a great majority of



the teachers and students interpreted all this in precisely the sense it was officially declared not to have. Even the dogmas of the divine origin of the nation and its dynasty, as they were preached by the new religion, came to be believed in by a generation of school children anxious, as every growing being is, to know of some purpose to life.

An accurate assessment of the nature and origin of the State religion of yesterday makes a judgment on the position of religion in the post-war public school alone possible. If the interpretation is correct that a spiritual vacuum tends of its nature to create false gods and counter-churches, the question is relevant whether such a vacuum exists again after one surrogate religion, devised to fill it, has collapsed of its own weight. In that case, all efforts ought to be coordinated towards salvaging as much as possible of the many admirable qualities of the common people, their love of family and child, their frugality and spirit of sacrifice, their respect for law and conscience, in short for the preservation of that ethical heritage which has survived both the disintegration of their religions and the assault on their moral culture on the part of westernizing reformers and militarist totalitarians alike.

Most post-war educational reform work, however, seems to be based on an entirely different interpretation of the facts. Instead of endeavors to preserve foundations and lay new bases, efforts seem to concentrate on their further sapping. An impetus towards change and a thirst for novelty have become once more the ruling passion, while scepticism and experimentation, this time under the banner of Dewey, are declared the supreme virtues.

"Anybody who nowadays defends the family and its rightful say in matters of education is commonly branded as a reactionary feudalism," Dr. Kotaro Tanaka, the leading Catholic layman and, for a few months after the war, Minister of Education, recently complained. Dr. Tanaka has also repeatedly protested in the House of Councillors, of which he is a member, against the hasty and short-sighted abolition of the Educational Rescript of the Emperor Meiji which had been issued in 1890 in concern over the iconoclastic tendencies of contemporary westernization and which, under its Confucian verbiage, contained pearls of educational wisdom. The Meiji Rescript has meanwhile been replaced by a diet-enacted new educational charter, the Basic Law of Education, an uninspiring document.

Many of the textbooks, published since the end of the war under the auspices of the Ministry, continue to spread the same kind of

secular progressivism. One of them in particular, *Democracy*, distributed mainly to secondary schools in nearly five million copies and, in addition, serialized over the national radio, is positively disastrous in its distortion of history as one continued process of glorious emancipation from the sinister forces which retarded the arrival of this blessed age where there is no evil that science, the secret ballot and universal suffrage cannot cure. Such doctrines can turn out dangerous among a people beset with irking and indeed intolerable ills. Among the industrial city dwellers especially, cut off as they are already from the soil and the past, such wholesale attacks against the past and tradition are liable to provoke a veritable movement of anarchy which will be all the more destructive, as the notion of moral responsibility was intimately connected with the institutions and customs now indiscriminately scorned.

This trend contributes considerably towards the radicalization of the undergraduate world. But what is even more distressing is to see responsible educational leaders, such as the highly respected President of Tokyo National University, Dr. Nambara, unwittingly encourage the perilous philosophy. He recently declared it "utterly without reason" to question the qualification of university professors who had joined the Communist Party, since "academic freedom" consisted in the liberty of studying "any ideology under the sun" in the hope of "the progress of knowledge by unbiased inquiry alone." The professor is a great admirer of German scholarship. He omits to point out that the "progress" fostered by the principle of "voraussetzungslose Wissenschaft" has largely been one of corrosion.

Into the fashionable progressivism of the moment, religion fits indeed only as an object of "unbiased research," and as such the Ministry attempted to treat it in a curricular manual issued in 1948 for the teaching of the newly introduced "Social Study Course" in elementary and secondary schools. In order to widen "the scientific knowledge of their environment," the pupils were to study the phenomenon of religion "from a purely sociological point of view." They were to visit temples and shrines and participate in festivals and processions. Religious leaders were to be interviewed and bonzes invited for lectures. Such problems as superstition, socially useful and less useful sects, higher and lower religions and the like were to be debated in the classroom. Few people found anything incongruous in the idea of treating religion as a mere "sociological phenomenon" or young children as detached sociologists. It was mostly Christian bodies, both Catholic and Protest-

ant, that pointed out the absurdities as well as the dangers of the suggested approach and succeeded in having the measure suspended.

It is possible to sympathize with the obvious perplexity of well-meaning ministerial officials at the confusion encountered among the representatives of innumerable Japanese sects whenever they met in committee to discuss the Social Study Course program or similar problems. As one sat in such meetings with the spokesmen of a disintegrating religious world, one was reminded of Mgr. Knox' remark: "You can't lump religions together like that... If you asked me whether I would rather that people worshipped Juggernaut or worshipped nothing, I should say without hesitation that I preferred them to worship nothing."

Religion can, indeed, hardly be re-introduced into the secularized public schools by an alliance of the government with the many decadent pagan sects, some of them suspiciously juggernautian in character and few with a serious following among the young. Dr. Paul Vieth, formerly religious adviser to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Japan, deplored in a recent address at Yale University the "too drastic" separation of State and religion as manifested in post-war Japanese legislation carried out "on the American pattern." He made such laws responsible for much of the "moral disintegration and spiritual decline" observable in contemporary Japan and would like the new Constitution interpreted as not opposed to "any teaching of religion as such by the schools" or "the inclusion of general religious subjects" in the curriculum. It is gratifying to see such serious concern expressed by an American Protestant. Nevertheless, it may be doubted whether a positive patronage of the State, by way of devising curricula and assigning subjects, could do much to revitalize religion in the public schools. The result would only be the spread of more secularism, since so many government functionaries and public school teachers more or less agree on the definition of "religion as such" as a decorative, or perhaps even harmful, by-product of civilization. If the Japanese are so irreligious, the fault is not only that of their laws; the laws are also the product of the irreligiosity of their civilization. For centuries, religion has been relegated to the margin of their society. The share of the West in this development has become once more conspicuous in the post-war period, but it was never absent all through the decades since the country was re-opened. However, an even larger share of the responsibility goes to the indigenous religious sects themselves, contemptuous of culture or pragmatically subservient to it as they so often are.

If the State is not to take sides, it should however be expected to put no obstacles in the way of the efforts of those serious religionists who view with alarm the continued dissipation of so much good will and the general lack of purpose in public education. It must be gratefully noted that, since the war, the attitude of Japanese authorities has been very generous in this respect. Public school buildings may be used for lectures on religion, under certain understandable conditions, and voluntary religious study circles are granted the greatest freedom on school premises. If such provisions work out in favour of Christianity rather than of the pagan sects, the reason is not mere opportunism but the conviction entertained by many educators that Christian principles are a better guarantee to reshape a society about to lose its soul.

### III. CATHOLIC EFFORTS

The public school system confronts the Church in Japan with a twofold problem, the pastoral and the missionary.

Less than half of the children of Catholic parents frequent Catholic schools, since there are not enough such schools or the opportunities they offer, particularly to boys, are not considered satisfactory, or again entrance requirements cannot be fulfilled. In fact, the principal *raison d'être* for Catholic schools in a mission country is not necessarily to cater for Catholics. In Japan, at any rate, such is the case, apart from the more compact Catholic communities in the Nagasaki district that date from the time of St. Francis Xavier.

It is estimated that some 15,000 Catholics at non-Catholic schools from the primary to the university level are found among the 17.7 million young Japanese who go to school. They are thus a woefully small minority scattered all over the country, and it is obvious that the usual Church-school relationship as worked out in Western countries, with its parity system and its released time or curricular instruction, is not applicable to the situation in Japan. The parishes have to look after the young generation exposed to the subtle influence of a modern pagan school with especial care, and the typical missionary church in town and country, however small and poorly equipped, invariably stands hospitably open to the young and in many cases puts at their disposal facilities for reading and recreation or arranges clubs for the various age groups. There are however many difficulties that the mission stations encounter both in the cities and the smaller towns. The demands of the public



schools on their pupils, especially of the elementary grade, are such that the children are frequently not even free on Sundays to attend church, nor can the pastor apply legal pressure for their release because of the extreme deference of both parents and pupils to the school authorities. A grave problem is also created by the temptations to which high school students, especially boys, are exposed at the public school. High school teachers have always been known for their earnest but ideologically unbalanced devotion. The new-fangled experimentation and discussion methods introduced since the end of the war turn into dangerous weapons of unprincipled relativism in their unexperienced hands. Problems such as the advisability of child-baptism, the merits of contraception, the case for and against Marxism are nowadays discussed by boys of fifteen and settled by ballot. Cases have become known where children were assigned the task of interviewing prostitutes for discussion in the Social Studies' class. All this proves unsettling to the Faith of the solitary Catholic boy in the class, and the inconsiderately hasty introduction of co-education into a society ill-equipped for it has added new ethical problems. Statistical data on the leakage among Japanese Catholics are as little ascertainable in Japan as elsewhere ; but many missionaries suspect that it is highest in the case of boys between the ages of thirteen and eighteen.

The pastors cannot cope alone with these and similar situations especially since they are primarily missionaries. The main burden in keeping the faith alive among the young rests with the Catholic family. Archbishop Maxinilien de Fuerstenberg has called the family "the great hope" for the spiritual regeneration of the nation, in a stirring New Year address to the Japanese people. That must be said with especial emphasis of the Catholic family. Families with both parents Catholic are, however, still the exception, and the greater part of the pastoral effort of the Church has, therefore, to concentrate on inspiring a Catholic home atmosphere. This intention explains the preponderance in Catholic literature of hagiographies, devotional treatises, popular tales and children's books that has given the Catholic press an almost *petit bourgeois* aspect. But the tendency is the result of a legitimate demand and, at any rate, it is so far impossible, with the paucity of gifted Catholic writers and the financial difficulties of Catholic publishing houses, to match the brilliant output of secular publishers. Catholic publications, it can safely be said, largely succeed in creating a Catholic family atmosphere and thus keeping intact the faith of Catholic children in public schools.

The pastoral task of the Church is however connected so intimately with its evangelizing mission that the two are hardly distinguishable. The care for the Catholic family itself often turns out to be the missionary task of converting the husband or the elder brother. Catholic literature, even if mainly intended for Catholics, must be so designed as also to propagate the Faith. And in the more direct contact with the State schools, the best way of procedure has proved to be the endeavor to couple the pastoral and the apostolic approach. Sunday schools consist of both Catholic and non-Catholic children, so do the boy-scout troupes, and again the chapters of the Catholic Students Federation and the Catholic Teachers' Alliance.

The associations of Catholic students and teachers are among the most promising post-war developments of Catholicism in Japan. They are also the most effective measure to enable Catholic thought to assert itself in the schoolrooms and on the campuses of the public schools. The movements are, however, not principally or exclusively devised for the State school system. Members of both federations are Catholics, whether they come from public or private institutions ; in fact, the membership from Catholic schools, where the rate of conversions is highest, predominates. Within Japan's Catholic population, it is especially the students and teachers who are most conscious of the social and cultural implications of their Faith and of its apostolic obligation. Both groups show little of the smug complacency which makes for ghetto developments in the West. Japanese Catholics constitute less than one quarter of one percent in the population, and the consciousness of being a helpless minority lay heavily on their minds for many decades. But since the end of the war it has proved to be a stimulating factor. The nation, or at least its intellectual leaders, are becoming aware of Catholicism. It is discussed in the periodicals and over the radio, and also in the schoolroom. Japanese intellectuals have always been quick in discerning new trends on the Western horizon, if they loomed large enough. This time it is unmistakable, even seen from the shores of the Pacific, that the Church is something of a force abroad, as witness the heroic resistance of Eastern European Catholics, the formation of Christian democratic parties and trade union movements, prominent Catholic novelists in Europe, Catholic bestsellers in the United States and even occasional Catholic existentialists. Of this great movement, the Catholic undergraduates and teachers proudly feel they are the representatives in a nation sorely in need of guidance. They are more acutely aware

of this than the rest of our Christians with their pronounced devotional preferences, and they are also more responsible for the promotion of the newly awakening interest in Catholicism in the country.

Local chapters of Catholic undergraduates had been in intermittent existence long before the war. These local groups began to flower with new vitality after the hostilities, and decided, in 1948, on the formation of a nation-wide federation. The National Federation of Catholic Students now has a membership of 1348 undergraduates. Headquarters are in Tokyo where it also has its most important chapter of 580 Catholic boys and girls, divided into groups of undergraduates at twenty-five Tokyo universities and colleges. The Federation is affiliated to the Pax Romana movement, and its method of approach shows similarities to the Newman Clubs in American colleges with the difference that, in Japan, the activity of Catholic undergraduates at public schools consists to a greater extent in attracting sympathizers to their lectures, discussions and exhibitions. The rate of catechumens is therefore unexpectedly high among the student population. 1348 may seem little within a total undergraduate population in Japan of 476,901. But the figure is already inaccurate because of the many baptized in the course of last year (112 in Tokyo alone) which the total does not yet include. Furthermore, their strength does not consist in their number but rather in their spiritual vigor which makes them on many public school campuses the most active ideological group beside the omnipresent Marx-Lenin Study Groups, the Dialectical History Research Associations, the Soviet Friendship Conferences, and the Protestant Bible Circles.

There have been a few regional organizations of Catholic teachers too, notably in Tokyo and Nagasaki, for many years. The decision to form some kind of loose federation was the fruit of a representatives' meeting on June 12, 1949, the memorable climax of the Xavier Quadricentennial celebrations in Tokyo. A National Catholic Teachers' Association was established, in the course of the year and has already 1520 members, Catholic teachers regardless of the school where they are employed; some 800 work in secondary schools, over 100 are college professors, the rest are in elementary schools. Only 497 of these are, however, employed at public schools, a small minority are on the staffs of non-Catholic private institutions, while the bulk are staff members of Catholic schools. The Catholic schools themselves stand in need of the help held forth by the Catholic Teachers' Alliance. The diffusion of Catholic educa-

tional principles, the deepening of the teachers' religious life and the mobilization of their apostolic capacities, these are points on the program of the Alliance which individual Catholic schools find it hard to accomplish on their own, since the majority of their staff members are not Catholics or, if they are, have little training *qua* Catholic educators. Catholic school managements realize this and are generously supporting the activities of the Alliance, and especially its forthcoming monthly magazine. With their help it may be possible to develop a movement which will make the voice of the Church heard in the parent-teachers associations, the teachers' unions and perhaps even the managements of public schools. These are the very fields where Japan's communists have reached their greatest influence. However, much has to happen before Catholics can muster the talent, the compactness and the determination to emulate the influence that communists exert through the three educational periodicals they control and the key positions they hold in the most important of the two national teachers' unions.

While the Students' Federation was organized by the Youth Department of the National Catholic Committee (the advisory board of the Japanese Hierarchy), the Education Department of the Committee was largely responsible for the formation of the Teachers' Alliance and will also be in charge of the new monthly. The Education Department has also sponsored a series of textbooks for high schools of which four volumes for the history, biology and the social study courses have been completed while three more are in preparation. These textbooks are already in use in both Catholic and non-Catholic schools, but they cannot yet be adopted by public schools because of the financial inability on the part of the Education Department to comply with the stipulations of the Ministry which insists on the completion, in print, of entire series, sometimes of six volumes, before even considering authorization. The Education Department is also preparing a four-volume Catholic instruction manual for teachers in all grades and for the students of senior high schools and junior colleges. Two other significant movements began last year with the support of the Education Department, a summer school course designed to grant scholastic degrees to Catholic teachers after four summer sessions and arranged by the Religious of the Sacred Heart in their newly inaugurated Women's College at Tokyo, and a Theology Evening School sponsored by Sophia, the Jesuit University at Tokyo. The Evening School, now in the third of a planned six



terms, has some 250 adult students of whom almost half are Catholic teachers desirous of obtaining the *missio canonica* promised by the Archbishop of Tokyo to those who pass the term examinations.

Such and similar accomplishments of Catholics in Japan may look small seen from abroad, and it may be questioned what some 2,000 Catholic teachers signify among the 607,972 total of teachers in Japan. Nevertheless to the men on the spot who have barely emerged from a time of frustration and oppression, they are signs hopeful beyond words. Catholics in Japan are at the same time conscious enough of the many more tasks still left undone. Talk tends to center much more around what still ought to be rather than on what has been accomplished, and the list of desiderata is wide and varied.

Dormitories are needed for Catholic or non-Catholic undergraduates or, strategically perhaps an even wiser move, for students in the graduate departments of the national universities. Only very small beginnings have been made in this direction by the Jesuits in Tokyo and by the Maryknoll Fathers in Kyoto. Kyoto is the first national university with an endowed chair for Thomism, at present occupied by a Dominican, and there could be more such chairs for the teaching of Catholic philosophy and sociology, if only the benefactors were forthcoming. Dominican Fathers have set up clubrooms for undergraduates at the National University of Sendai and the Jesuits at Okayama; but at Tokyo with its tremendous student population and the most important of the national universities, little has been accomplished as yet, although plans and good will are not lacking. Not a single Catholic information library exists so far, although it would be an ideal medium to attract teachers and students alike. The Jesuits are planning to establish one in Tokyo, but it would help the school apostolate in many more cities in the country. University extension courses too are, so far, only carried out in the evening schools of Sophia University. With more funds and more men available they could develop into a national movement and would produce more results than the sporadic public lecture courses sometimes arranged by local Catholic missions.

However, at the top of the list of these dreams stands the vision of a truly great Catholic Institute of Higher Learning, supported in the shape of libraries, endowed chairs and visiting professors by the Catholics of the world. Such a graduate school should be exacting in its standards so as to attract those serious young Japan-

ese of all classes who wish to be leaders and therefore scorn the many and fast-multiplying colleges where the office employees and businessmen are trained. Such a center need not enter into unprofitable competition with the scientific research institutes of the State schools ; through schools of education, law, philosophy, literature and sociology, it should make Catholic influence felt where it is most needed and appreciated. The institute would also give real prestige to a large program of adult education, and it would thus become a direct apostolic force in training Catholic lay leaders. It is such leaders that are still lacking, for even in the promising students' and teachers' movements, or in the Catholic trade-unionists' groups, there is much more good will and enthusiasm than that sureness of touch and firmness of conviction which come from a deep understanding of the Faith.

"To offer another nation your culture first and your religion second is the reversal of values," T. S. Eliot has recently written. Yet with this reversal of values, the history of modern Japan has opened in the nineteenth century, and under the handicap of this reversal the Church has tried to evangelize the nation. For decades, her missionary efforts have, therefore, resulted in little more than gaining a few converts here and there, and building up one or the other tiny congregation of trivial importance within a nation that, all the time, was moving in another direction. Nowhere has this disastrous direction become more obvious than in the vast State-controlled school machinery which has been fashioned after every conceivable Western theory and pattern except the ideals of Catholicism.

To reverse a reversal, that is the almost superhuman task set to the Catholic educator in Japan. Its achievement becomes more urgent as the lights go out all over the Asiatic continent.

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# African Mentality and the Secular School

by Joseph VAN WING, S. J.

*Formerly Missionary at Kisantu, Belgian Congo,*

*Member of the Belgian Colonial Council,*

*Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain*<sup>1</sup>

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## I. *Problem raised by a U. N. O. Commission recommendation.*

The Charter of the United Nations, in chapter XI dealing with non-autonomous territories, lays down that the members responsible for the administration of territories of this kind accept as a sacred duty the obligation of safeguarding the culture of the populations in question, their political, economic and social progress, as also the development of their education.

Among these obligations imposed on the States Administrators two only need concern us: the first, a general one, to respect the culture proper to the people of these territories, and the second, to develop their education.

This double obligation is thus imposed on all the States who have the administration of the non-autonomous negro-African peoples. Hitherto, in all these colonies and protectorates (to give them their traditional title) education has, with few exceptions, been given in missionary schools.

Now in 1948 U. N. O. sent enquiry commissions to three African countries under trusteeship and protected by the double clause just mentioned. One of these three territories, Ruanda-Urundi, is under Belgian administration; all the primary and middle school instruction is given in schools run by missionaries. Now, the commission of enquiry recommended an educational reform, that is to say that it should be laicised.

The reason for this "recommendation" is the need to respect

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<sup>1</sup> Readers are acquainted with two previous articles in *Lumen Vitae*, by Fr. VAN WING, that attracted some attention: I (1946), p. 156; IV (1949), p. 25. — Present address: 8, chaussée de Haecht, Brussels, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

liberty of conscience and of culture. Is this reason well founded ? It does not seem so. For these two liberties are safeguarded in all the public schools in Ruanda-Urundi as in the Belgian Congo. However this may be, U. N. O. must be commended on its wish to see respected the religious opinions of African children. But is it justified in its choice of means ? Is it more likely that these opinions will be treated with more respect in secular than in missionary schools ? Who can tell ?

The question should be raised to a higher level, that of the principles which U. N. O. has laid down in its charter, when defining the sacred charge of the colonising nations : that of promoting the development of popular education while respecting their indigenous culture.

There is one fact which U. N. O. recognises, for it is known to all who are familiar with negro-African cultures, especially Frobenius ; that is, that these cultures are essentially *religious*.

Religion is the soul of these cultures ; will a secular education respect this soul ? That is the question which the Tutelary Commission has raised on the occasion of its visit to Ruanda-Urundi.

## *2. The fundamentally religious character of negro-African cultures.*

The religious character of negro-African cultures is shown in the plastic arts and in their rich and varied folklore. Part of their oral literature is concerned with universal human themes, but the greater part is steeped in religious concepts and sentiments.

We also know that the life of the individual African, from birth to death, is woven with religious and religious practices ; his social life is dominated by ceremonies of ancestor worship.

Doubtless this worship is often mingled with magic practices, for worship and magic have much in common. We will not dwell on this : our aim is to get at the real foundation of the conception of life and the world which inspires negro-African religions.

The African is deeply conscious of being linked through his parents with the long chain of his ancestors, right up to the first who received existence from the First Cause, the Supreme Being. Life received through his ancestors must be continued and transmitted to others in conformity with ancestral laws. In this way he will survive on the earth in his descendants, and will live happy in the hereafter with his ancestors. For this reason the African looks upon life as the most precious possession ; however miserable it may seem to be, it is worth living. He does not speak of " this wret-



ched life." Sufferings are transitory, he will pass over to the other side where he will live for ever. Physical trials fail to discourage him. The very rare suicides are due to some deep humiliation, which has completely unbalanced the individual. Those who are condemned to death await the hour of execution calmly. Not that they are fatalists, but they look upon death as an immediate passing to a lasting life.

Since life is an inestimable gift, received from God through their ancestors, fecundity is looked upon as the most desirable of blessings and sterility as the greatest curse. For the same reason the transmission of life seems to them to be, not a profane business dependent on the will of the individual, but a sacred act, to take place in conjugal union consecrated by a matrimonial contract which is most solemn in its juridical form and of which some of the rites are religious. There are terrible sanctions to ensure the observance of these contracts. It is a significant fact that nowhere in Dark Africa has civil marriage, introduced by civic authorities, met with the slightest success. In the eyes of the Africans, it is an empty formality without force or value.

Their entire religious and moral life is based upon two fundamental concepts : dependence upon a Supreme Being, the first and transcendent Cause of the world and of its complicated machinery of forces ; the existence of the individual spiritual soul which will survive the body.

### 3. *Christian schools ? Secular schools ?*

The pure monotheism of the Africans and their belief in the survival of the soul are concepts which the *Christian school* can only strengthen and enrich.

Can one say the same of *secular education* ? What will its attitude be towards the basic beliefs of Dark Africa ? What does the U. N. O. expect from it ? Why do they wish to replace the priest by the lay teacher ?

It seems to us that U. N. O. is led by the opinion current in the irreligious world : that the priests represent *shackling of thought*, and that on the contrary, secularism, emancipation, liberty, are synonyms. In fact, they wish to see the reign of *free-thought* established by means of the secular school.

Now, free-thought springs from the postulate : "A First Cause of man and the world does not exist." This proposition, having the force of dogma, will inspire the whole teaching. But it will run counter to the fundamental belief of the African whose conception

of life is based on monotheism and the recognition of an ontological dependence on the Supreme Being. If man's existence could be completely explained by some evolution of which man is the measure, then, to the African, man would himself become the Supreme Being.

So, Christianity respects the fundamental belief of a vast country ; secularism opposes it.

It may perhaps be objected that Christianity also is opposed to some aspects of the religious life of the African. We acknowledge this quite readily, as we have already alluded to the mingling of worship and magic.

If, in this world, any religious life, in order to become more perfect, must submit to a continued process of purification, it is particularly true of an interior and exterior cultus rendered to God amid pagan surroundings. But it is one thing to break the bond which links the creature to the Supreme Being ; quite another to purify this relationship and make his worship more disinterested. By pruning the tree, the gardener helps its growth and its production. Finally, if one remembers that Christianity answers the deepest urge of nature by transcending it supernaturally, one can understand the reason for our contention that the Christian school not only respects the African's fundamental beliefs but is able to support, strengthen and enrich them.<sup>2</sup>

Christianity is not only the normal way by which the Africans can enter into intimate communion with God, but also that which they must follow if they are to become united nations and join the fellowship of other races.

Africans can conceive of solidarity only as that which is indispensable for the existence of the clan. In order to become nations, they must break the bounds of the clan and find a solidarity based on the human person ; *a fortiori*, to rise to true human brotherhood. Like the African's religious dispositions, his social tendencies must be respected, pruned, strengthened. What godless morality can protect him against individualism and communism and help him to become aware of the dignity of the human person and the worldwide community of man ?

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<sup>2</sup> See *Christian Humanism in Africa*, in this review, IV (1949), pp. 40-52.

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# Towards a Christian Humanism in Ruanda

by Gérard MWEREKANDE

*Great Seminary, Nyakibanda (Astrida), Ruanda*<sup>1</sup>

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Education has taken a great stride forward in Ruanda during the last few years. Thanks to the close collaboration between the government and the missions, the primary schools have increased considerably and become much better organised.

The inhabitants, at first hesitant, now send their children willingly, especially the boys. They are realising more and more that an unlettered youth is youth without a future ; so we now have a very numerous schoolgoing population.

Parents who are anxious for their children's welfare desire a higher education for them, so that they may be able to look forward to a happier and more stable future. Is this not for the best interests of the country as a whole ? The nation is progressing rapidly and is ambitious to rise still higher in the civilised scale. How can this be achieved without native doctors, engineers, agriculturists, capable of cooperating with the tutelary power ? Why should the internal trade be carried on solely by Greeks, Arabs and Hindus when natives could be trained to replace them ? Problems such as these intensify the desire for higher education.

Now, "natura non facit saltus." It is not possible to pass straight from a primary school to a higher course of studies ; secondary education is indispensable. And there is in existence only one

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<sup>1</sup> The Abbé MWEREKANDE is a seminarist of the Batutsi race. During his vacations, he is often in the company of the Mwami and enjoys the kindness and confidence of this prince. He has sent us a report of a highly interesting conversation. It is the first article from the pen of a native cleric, which *Lumen Vitae* has had the pleasure of publishing. Our readers will appreciate both content and style. — Address : Grand Séminaire, Nyakibanda, par Astrida, RUANDA (Editor's note).

training school (others are under construction) together with a group of students at Astrida for the training of subordinate officials for the administration, and the minor posts in medicine, agriculture and veterinary work. This instruction is certainly most necessary, but hardly a preparation to a university education.

As the basis of higher education an intellectual training on broad lines is required, such as is supplied by the humanities. These alone would enable our young people (that is to say, the best among them) to rise to that development of personality which opens to a man all great values of life.<sup>2</sup>

The Heads of the Belgian Congo Mission and that of Ruanda-Urundi drew up the following resolution at their plenary conference in 1945: "The Latin and modern humanities appear at present to be indispensable for young Africans of ambition, capable of a deeper and more complete training... Of what good is it for Africans to be told that racial barriers do not exist, if they are not given the means for the best among them to scale the ladder of intellectual and social progress? We therefore declare unhesitatingly that an institute for higher education is necessary for the Colony, having the humanities as a base."<sup>3</sup>

To this must be added the resolution adopted by the delegates of U. N. O. "The visiting mission considers that the authority in charge of the administration ought to take more direct interest in education and to establish a certain number of non-confessional schools to be run by it... The mission hopes that it will be possible to establish at Ruanda-Urundi as soon as possible, three complete secondary schools, preferably official and non-denominational, and a Latin secondary school, from which the pupils could pass to the Belgian universities."<sup>4</sup>

Our Mwami, Charles Léon Pierre Mutara, ever solicitous for his people's welfare, wishes to found a college in his country. But, contrary to the suggestions of the delegates of U. N. O., favouring government education, the Mwami wishes to set up a Catholic college.

I wanted to find out the reasons for this preference, and had the good fortune to be present at a conversation during which the

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<sup>2</sup> See Joseph VAN WING, *Christian Humanism in Africa*, in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n. 1, pp. 25-39.

<sup>3</sup> See *Troisième Conférence Plénière de Léopoldville*, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> *Report presented to the U. N. O.*, October 31st 1948.



Mwami himself raised the question. I may sum up his views on the subject as follows :

First of all, the people themselves, Christian for the greater part, desire it. The most influential strata of the population, nearly all the head men are Christians, and as such, do not wish to send their children to the care of any but Catholics. Those who are not Christians, have a respect for Christian morality and wish to see it preponderate in their country. And they are all convinced that their youth must be entrusted to those who practice Christian morality in its entirety.

The people of Ruanda certainly have a moral code which is fundamentally in conformity with the natural law : but the principle of this morality lies chiefly in the customs of the tribe, which have lost or are losing their hold upon the rising generation. The inner element giving to morality its obligatory character has not the power to restrain a man on the downward slope of certain errors such as atheism. Morality based on custom is unable to arouse an awareness of moral obligations arising from a higher state of civilisation. With the material benefits brought by western civilisation, the people risk falling into materialism and selfishness which exalts self-interests and disregards social obligations or concern for the common good. Only the altruism of Christianity can efficaciously ensure the development of the social virtues as necessary in Ruanda as anywhere else : justice, respect for authority, charity to the less fortunate, cooperation in the way of progress and civilisation.

Our young people need not only intellectual training but even more a moral training, making them worthy of respect and honour. Mere intelligence has produced disordered minds ; never has sound morality done so.

Finally, the people of Ruanda are profoundly religious. Their theodicy is full of beauty and the name of Imana (God) is constantly on their lips, spoken with reverence and love. But those who have not yet come under the influence of Christianity see in all happenings the intervention, not of Imana, but of a very powerful being. Imana is very good but easygoing. The other spirits must be placated to prevent their ceaseless pestering. Being continually afraid of annoying these spirits and incurring their terrible fury, the people place themselves under their protection, completely servile to them, even going so far in their religious rites as to endeavour to draw the superior strength of these beings into themselves.

A prey to these fears, the Ruanda are never at peace.

All this superstition is an impediment to progress. But it is not a burden which can be laid down at will : it is a matter of the transformation of the entire life, of setting right natural aspirations. This religious sense, the object of which is false, must be directed towards the true object of worship. It is useless to desire its suppression.

Now, the Christian religion is the only one which can assuage this need of the soul of the Ruanda and, at the same time, give him the calm and peace of mind necessary for the full development of his faculties. It gives him God, the true Imana, from Whom comes all that happens to us. And because He always wishes us well, nothing harmful can befall those who have recourse to Him.

It is in the God of the Christians that the deeply religious aspirations of the people can find their fulfilment and their continuation in the Divine infinity.

Once this people has been freed from the weight of their ancestral impediment to progress, they will go forward easily to God, and also towards social progress, towards that human personality which makes up a nation's worth.

These are the reasons which actuate our Mwami in his desire to found a Catholic college : to ensure his people a complete training, a formation of the whole man which will accomplish the greatness of the Ruanda as it has done that of those nations which we admire.

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*PART II*

The Religious Education  
of State Schools Pupils

# Observations on the Religious Formation of State Schools Pupils

REPORTS FROM :

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Walter CAREY

*former Anglican Bishop of Bloemfontein, South Africa.*

The Rev. F. H. DRINKWATER

*Editor of « The Sower », Dudley, England.*

Signor Fausto MONTANARI

*Professor at the Lycée, Genoa, Italy.*

Signor Gesualdo NOSENGO

*National President of the Union of Catholic Italian*

*Professors for middle school teaching, Rome, Italy*

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It would require a large volume were we to furnish exhaustive information concerning the religious education of pupils of State schools. Besides, it is not possible to collect enough data for a similar documentation of catechetical work. We may, however, present a bird's eye view of the situation as it is at present : alongside well cultivated fields there are some still awaiting ploughman and sower. To the two questions : *Do the pupils receive their religious instruction in or out of school ?* and *Is the instruction of good quality ?* we give some of the chief of the observations received. As we wish to be constructive we will pay more attention to what remains to be done than to what has already been achieved. The reader will therefore avoid any unjustifiable pessimism. After a short description of present needs we shall invite prominent thinkers and teachers to make suggestions ; we will ask organisers to tell us of their plans.

1. *Do pupils of the State schools receive religious instruction ?* — Obviously this must depend, at least in part, on the parents. Generally speaking, apart from financial or geographical reasons, those



who send their children by preference to the undenominational or interdenominational schools are not particularly careful as to religious instruction. We are here interested to know if the instruction is so organised that baptised children receive it as a matter of course if their parents do not formally withhold their consent.

*Denominational State schools* put religious teaching on their curriculum.<sup>1</sup> One may add to them those State schools which, *in fact* if not by law, are denominational. Such are those in Ireland,<sup>2</sup> of Alsace Lorraine and several States in Western Germany.

In other countries — England, Belgium, most of the States of South America, etc. — *a course in religion at the schools is provided for by law.*

In England, the syllabus is drawn up in collaboration by representatives of the various Christian non-Catholic sects. Several articles which have appeared in *Lumen Vitae* have shown how the Education Act of 1944 demonstrated again that the English do not desire to see their schools laicised.<sup>3</sup>

In Belgium,<sup>4</sup> according to the statistics of 31st December 1947, religious instruction was given in 4,887 primary schools, and not in 211 schools. These 211 are chiefly in the densely populated areas of Brussels and Antwerp. In greater Brussels, out of 163 schools, 89 were without any religious teaching. The position was worse in Antwerp and is no better up to the present time. Religion is not taught in the primary Council schools. According to the statistics of 1948 Antwerp numbers about 21,000 children (20,895 in 1948), ranging from 6 to 14 years old; 11,000 to 12,000 of which attend Catholic schools. The 8,000 to 10,000 others, baptised except for rare exceptions, are on the books of the Council schools. An enquiry made in the parish of St. Eloi, containing 13,000 inhabitants shows that from 1942 to 1948 only 35 % of the school children took the catechism course in preparation for their First Communion; from which it follows that the other two-thirds grew

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<sup>1</sup> See *above*, in the fourth article, the communication from Émile BAAS about Alsace, and that of the Swiss priest on the subject of the cantons of Friburg and Valais; see also the article by Paul WESTHOFF concerning various States in Germany.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. on this subject the well documented article by Michael TYNAN in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), nos 2 and 3.

<sup>3</sup> On the subject of Great Britain, cf. the articles in *Lumen Vitae* by J. MURRAY (I, 1946, no 1), A. C. F. BEALES (I, 1946, no 3), B. A. YEAXLEE (II, 1947, no 3), FR. F. H. DRINKWATER (III, 1948, no 3), P. J. LAMB (III, 1948, no 2).

<sup>4</sup> See the article by FR. RANWEZ in *Lumen Vitae*, I (1946), no 3.

up with no religious instruction. Many illusions would, it seems, fall to the ground if similar enquiries were made in other parishes of Antwerp. We will return to this case in order to seek the causes for it.

The lack of religious training in South America is especially striking.<sup>5</sup> All our correspondents from there write to this effect. "In Chili religion is taught in the Council schools *as far as the dearth of teachers allows*." (Hugo MONTES). And the Rev. HURTADO states that there are "461,490 children on the books of the 3,367 primary schools, and only 267 religious teachers... If the lay teacher — who is not obliged to teach religion — wishes to do so, he may instil some few ideas. In 1939, the secular clergy numbered, in Chili, 780; the regular clergy, 855; a total of 1615 priests, or 1 for every 3,000 souls."

In Bolivia, where religious teaching is being organised, the Rev. Joaquín R. FERNÁNDEZ tells us that: "There is not yet much attention paid to the religious training of the pupils, as the laws relating to it are too recent. *The lack of priests and teachers partly explains this state of affairs*." Our Colombian correspondents: José E. PIESCHACÓN, Juan Manuel PACHECO, the Rev. Fr. CANCELADO also declare that the teaching of religion is deficient "*because of the shortage of priests*."

Among countries where *religion is not taught at council schools*<sup>6</sup> the United States stand out as regards the attention paid to the pupils in these schools.<sup>7</sup> The Archconfraternity of Christian Doctrine carries on an excellent work in organising courses either during the school year or in the holidays. And yet, the reporters of one of the latest congresses of the Archconfraternity (Boston, 1946) thought good to insist on the necessity for further work in the religious teaching of the pupils at the State schools. It was pointed out to those at the congress that, in the United States, 50 % of the Catholic children of primary school age, and 75 % of the adolescents at secondary schools attend the State schools.

When we look at other countries, at some of the Canadian pro-

<sup>5</sup> See, in the first article, the communications concerning Bolivia and Columbia. See also in *Lumen Vitae* the report on the second and third pan-American Congress of catholic education (I, 1946, n° 4); IV, 1949, n° 1).

<sup>6</sup> With regard to Holland, see the detailed study of W. BLESS and J. W. DINJENS, in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n° 2.

<sup>7</sup> See, in *Lumen Vitae*, Sister [M. ROSALIA's article (I, 1946, n° 3) and those of Bakewell MORISSON (IV, 1949, n° 4) and L. O'CONNELL (IV, 1949, n° 4).

vinces for example,<sup>8</sup> we are convinced that there is a great effort called for there, too, seeing that such a great number of children do not hear the message of Christianity.

In France, according to the Rev. Canon BOYER and Fr. COLOMB, the situation is not disquieting if one looks only to statistics: with the exception of some of dioceses, 90 to 95 % of the children at secular schools receive instruction at catechism classes.<sup>9</sup> Later on, we will consider the quality of the teaching.

We will now revert to the preceding observations and look at the *reasons* for this defective state of things. We have already mentioned one: *the shortage of priests*. There are others.

First of all, there is a *kind of protectionism in favour of the denominational schools* wherever the State institutions are neutral or denominational. One can understand the solicitude of the churches for the schools which they maintain only at the price of devotion and generosity which is often heroic. Would not these schools lose their *raison d'être* if they undertook to give religious instruction to all baptised children who may be sent to them? Would not the enemies of denominational schools exploit this devotion to duty on the part of the clergy, especially if these were to work in the State schools? In the United States the idea of organising "holiday schools" was received by some with reserve: they feared lest such schools would harm the Catholic ones. Actually, the contrary has been the case. Where it has been possible many have gone from the State schools to the Catholic ones. In a much smaller area, the Liège region (Belgium), the same apprehensions were followed by the same results. Before religious classes had been established in the Council schools of the area, a third of the children attended the non-provided establishments; two thirds, the Council ones. Now the proportions are 45 % and 55 % respectively.<sup>10</sup>

Elsewhere, religious teaching suffers from *circumstances which are inimical to all teaching*. In Chili, out of a million children of school age, 400,000 attend no school at all. In Australia, many

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<sup>8</sup> Fr. M. ALLEN has given the readers of *Lumen Vitae* some notes about Toronto, III (1948), n° 4.

<sup>9</sup> See the article by the Rev. Canon BOYER, *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n° 3. Even from the point of view of quantity, it should be noted that many adolescents do not get beyond the elementary or primary stage in religious studies and that the priests destined for the religious training of pupils of the State secondary schools are relatively few in number.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the article by B. TROQUET, in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n° 1.

children grow up without any schooling except by correspondence courses.<sup>11</sup> These extreme cases are, of course, exceptional. But quite often the rural areas do present great difficulties in the way of religious instruction. In the United States the CCD has to increase its work.

Need we, in conclusion, recall that the *disturbances caused by the war* have on some counts at any rate, transformed whole territories into mission lands? The German teachers who for four years have written for this review, have described the physical and moral distress of "displaced persons," especially the young, whom religious teaching hardly reaches.<sup>12</sup>

2. *Is religious teaching of good quality?* — In a brochure, the Rev. COLOMB describes the "lamentable state"<sup>13</sup> of religious teaching in France: the children have too short a time in which to learn their religion; the rooms and apparatus contrast unfavourably with those used for secular subjects; handbooks and syllabuses are not up to date; many of the catechists are hampered by having to use methods palpably inefficient...

We will confine ourselves to merely indicating two failings which — need it be said? — do not obtain everywhere to the same degree: a *low level of faith*, and consequently a less convincing witness on the part of the teachers, a failing in that *humanism* which is so comprehensively attractive.

M. Émile BAAS spoke of a lessening of faith among the teachers in Alsace, a lethargy about the giving of religious instruction. In other countries, Belgium among them, the religious classes have actually been given by teachers whose faith is wavering. Outside Catholic circles, modernism or indifference is alienating more and more of the professors from the Christian faith. Usually, they get themselves dispensed from giving religious teaching, but many do give it all the same. The Right Reverend Dr. CAREY, formerly bishop of Bloemfontein (Church of England),<sup>14</sup> tells what he thinks

<sup>11</sup> See the article by Msgr. J. T. McMAHON, in *Lumen Vitae*, III (1948), n° 4.

<sup>12</sup> See the articles in *Lumen Vitae* by L. ESCH (I, 1946, 2; III, 1948, 4) and by Fr. SLADEK (IV, 1949, 4).

<sup>13</sup> Joseph COLOMB, P. S. S., *La grande pitié de l'enseignement chrétien*, in *Les documents du Centre "Jeunesse de l'Église,"* Petit-Clamart.

<sup>14</sup> The Rt. Rev. Dr. Walter Julius CAREY, born Owston Rectory, Leicestershire, 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1875; educated: Bedford School (Head of the School); Hertford College, Oxford (Exhibitioner); 2nd Class Moderns 1896; and 2nd Class Greats, 1898; Curate of the Ascension Lavender Hill, 1899-1908; Librarian Pusey House, Oxford,



of such an attitude (in speaking of 'Public Schools' he is using the term in the English sense).

*Religion and Education.* I am asked — and I feel honoured — to write a short article on this momentous question. I initiated, a few months ago, an interesting discussion on this matter in the *London Times*.<sup>15</sup> Hence my invitation to write this.

In England there is no difficulty in what we call the "Public schools." You have heard of them: Eton, Harrow, Winchester and forty or fifty others. These have their own chapels, their own chaplains and teach without hindrance the Christian Faith, and I don't suppose that anybody teaches the Faith there unless in some real sense he believes it. It is easy to criticise "Public School religion" but yet the high standard of English administrators all over the world shows that this teaching is not in vain.

But these "public schools" are not "national." They are recognised, but not maintained financially nor staffed by any State control as national schools are. Hence the religious teaching may or may not be given by persons who believe in it themselves. People on the Continent find it hard to understand the English: we are not logical nor want to be; so that although "national school" teachers are jealous of and do not allow — denominational teachers to come in from outside (and do not have to be discriminated into "believers" and "not-believers,") yet *in practice* they are often good. Common sense in a national school often manages to arrange that those who teach, believe themselves. Often they are very good.

But all the same it *is* possible for non-believers to teach e. g. the Scriptures and I hold this to be as stupid and wrong as for a "Left-wing" teacher to teach "Right-wing" politics. It ought to be a matter of conscience that if a man is an agnostic or atheist or non-Christian, he should honestly refuse to teach Christian doctrine.

I don't think there is an easy way out, but it is a matter of common honesty, and of common sense arrangement. It is often so arranged, but I want it *always so*.

If the religious course properly so-called hardly ever turns the pupil away from the end to which it should direct him, it more often happens that, in State schools, the diversities of opinion and manner of approach to religion among the teachers leads to confusion among their pupils. The Rev. F. H. DRINKWATER has observed this to be the case in England.

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1908-1914; Chaplain Royal Navy, 1914-1919; Warden Lincoln Theological College, 1919-1921; Bishop of Bloemfontein, 1921-1933; Chief Messenger of Society for Propagation of the Gospel, 1934-1935; Chaplain to Eastbourne College, 1936. — Address: The College, Eastbourne, C/o Westminster Bank, Clapham Junction, London, S. W. 11, ENGLAND (Editor's note).

<sup>15</sup> See the article by Fr. SOMERVILLE, in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n° 4 (Editor's note).

Let us imagine a staff of some "State" secondary school. Perhaps 20 teachers. Let us say that 5 (possibly including even the head), are unbelievers, who do not appear at the prayers and never take any class for "Scripture." Another 5 believe vaguely in God, but also teach a materialistic evolution and have no idea of Trinity or Incarnation. Of the remainder who practise some religion, 2 are Catholics, who stay away from prayers, 2 are earnest Methodists (and fundamentalists about the Bible), 3 are Church of England modernists, and 3 are "high Anglicans." A thoughtful pupil will certainly perceive that some of the teachers (perhaps the teacher he most admires) apparently thinks religion can be ignored; and that those who do teach religion seem often to hold contradictory ideas about the divinity of Christ, or about the Resurrection, or the inspiration of Scripture, or the nature of the Church, or the sacraments, or the need of a sudden "conversion." The pupils will see that every teacher believes what pleases him, and that there is no external criterion of truth; why then should the pupil take religion seriously?

As regards the second failing, *the lack of humanism with all its consequences*, I leave it to a distinguished humanist, Professor Fausto MONTANARI, to describe it to us. His communication, primarily concerned with Italy, has a wider bearing in its criticisms.

In Italy, religious teaching was restored twenty years ago in the secondary schools after a break of fifty years; as yet it has given but poor results. The results are better for general training, since the pupils look upon religion as a vital matter which cannot be neglected either at school or in after life.

The chief causes of this partial lack of success seem to be as follows:

1. The religious instructors, mostly priests, have been mainly concerned with overcoming hostility to the new teaching, by showing themselves to be indulgent. In order to win over the pupils, they have reduced the syllabus, passed the little time at their disposal in familiar chats; they have dealt with most diverse subjects, even on occasion giving explanations about other things, and so turning the religious course into a pleasant after-school pastime. They have gained the sympathy of their pupils and a certain friendliness has grown up: a remarkable result in a country with such a secular tradition as Italy. This attitude, however, has all too often resulted in religion being treated as simply an affair of feelings, and its capital importance and true foundations have not been touched upon.

2. Many of the religious teachers are lacking in prestige, either because they cannot keep order in their classes or because they cannot make the importance of the subject appreciated by the pupils. They have not the culture learning nor the university qualifications of the other teachers. The complaint is not their lack of doctrine as their inability to present it to minds accustomed to the modern methods and terminology. This is particularly the case in the high schools where the pupils are taught some philosophy and acquire a critical outlook.

3. From this follows that the religious teacher is often incapable of giving his subject the intellectual attraction that the other professors can. Religious realities remain therefore outside the field of culture and do not take a high place which is theirs by right. Many of the pupils think of religion as being a specialist affair, very arid to memorise, a kind of myth quite outside practical life.

4. The religious teachers lack time and leisure, overburned as they are with the care of souls, preaching and administrative affairs. Teaching can only be for them an occupation of secondary importance.

5. Very often the priests who are given the task are of excellent character, but not up to the standard of learning necessary. Practical considerations make this inevitable, such as the question of finance, the impossibility of finding better qualified men, who are not occupied in equally urgent tasks. And we must also note a failure to realise that teaching in the State schools is an activity at least as important as other apostolic works.

As a remedy for these drawbacks, it has been proposed to make the rules more rigid or to allow two hours of religious instruction per week. Actually in practice only one hour a week is given and the teacher has neither the right of giving a reward nor the power to examinations; the most he can do is to give his quarterly report which has no disciplinary effect.

I do not think that external means can improve the efficiency of religious instruction. What is wanted is a real body of catechists, making teaching their chief activity, possessing a university standard of theology and being trained by special courses for teaching in schools. To exert any deep influence on their pupils the catechists must know the modern mind and modern cultural terminology. Only then will they correct false ideas and suggest means of centering all moral and intellectual training on the religious life.

“We must be careful never to lose sight of what Pope Pius XII has recently told us of the power of the interior life and that the best organisations are nothing unless animated by charity. The catechist who lives with God is the only one who can speak well of Him. But this need of an interior life for the catechist is a perennial need; it is not a special element in the present-day problem of teaching the catechism. We may, however, be allowed to say that the wider the organisation of catechists, the deeper must their interior life be in order to shape the organisation.”<sup>16</sup> (J. COLOMB).

Moved by the Holy Spirit, the catechist, priest or lay, will entertain a lofty conception of Christian education. We are pleased to quote the Very Rev. Dr. CAREY again.

May I end by saying very forcibly what I believe true education is.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 9-10.

1) Its primary function is to produce *character*. To teach a boy or girl to be honest, truthful, trustworthy, clean. What's the good of giving knowledge to liars ? Knowledge without character makes clever devils.

2) After that knowledge *must* go the power to "think independently," to discriminate, to choose, to judge. Otherwise people are at the mercy of mere emotion or mass emotion, and that can be stupid and deadly.

Finally, may I say with the utmost conviction what I believe to be at the bottom of *Christian education*.

For our difficulty is not only the apathy and stupidity of mankind, but the divorce between *worship* and *conduct* in *Christians*.

There are my two pivotal points. — The Grace of God is ever-present and ready, but for our own responsibility and response we *must* have :

1) Personal conviction and surrender of our whole life to God. "My son, give me thine heart." Till that is done, or doing, all is futile.

2) Life lived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Humanism is silly and futile. Man cannot save man : only the Holy Spirit can do that. He, when we ask Him, can do everything for us. He will open our eyes ; bring us to God through and in Christ ; give us power to live the life of full vitality and joy ; and so graft us into the Church of Christ with its doctrine and sacraments and family life ; that life is really Life at last : courageous, joyful, clean, unselfish, radiant.

That is what education means for me at least, when it is utter and thorough. I am completely so convinced myself, and I know it is true for *all*. God grant they see it.

We would like to recall these fundamental requirements before inviting Professor G. NOSENGO, national president of the union of Catholic teachers in middle schools, to give us the practical conclusions drawn from his personal experiences linked with those of many colleagues.<sup>17</sup>

Various articles which have appeared abroad on the subject of religious teaching have made us realise that in other countries besides Italy the chief problem set by the giving of religious courses in State schools is that of the training of suitable teachers. Their choice and the methods which they are to employ, their pedagogic and didactical qualifications, all these questions will only be solved by degrees.

These few notes deal only with the teaching of religion in the State secondary schools.

<sup>17</sup> Laureate of philosophy in the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Mr. G. NOSENGO was for six years assistant in the pedagogy course of the same University. He has been called upon to be a member of ministerial commissions for the reform of private institutions and of the commission for educational reform. He teaches pedagogy at the pontifical university of Propaganda fide. M. NOSENGO has published about fifteen pedagogical or didactic works. — Address : 1, via della Conciliazione, Roma, ITALY (Editor's note).



The tendencies of modern pedagogy, the very nature of religious instruction and the need for thoroughness in the training of teachers lead us to put forward the following four requirements as a subject for study.

1. The need to know the psychology of the adolescent and in particular the religious psychology.
2. The need for a more didactic treatment of religious problems.
3. The need for didactic experiments according to scientific methods.
4. The need for a concrete treatment of religious education to deal adequately with the vital requirements of the young and for the adoption of some method which would enable teachers to be more practical.

I. It is a certain fact that a study of psychology enables a teacher to know adolescents better and to arrange his courses better. Some of those responsible for religious education are most anxious to renovate the didactic equipment of teachers and to use modern psychological findings with regard to behaviour in general or religious conduct in particular. The study of juvenile religious psychology is therefore necessary. Some teachers have already gone in for it with a certain amount of success. But they are few and far between. Wider and deeper research is needed.

Ignorance of the psychological and spiritual make-up of the adolescent leads inevitably to defective teaching of religion. Such teaching may be fatal to a progress in religious life owing to the indifference, disgust, revolt or irony which it provokes. Adolescents have within themselves spiritual, mental and affective desires which religion alone can satisfy. If the teacher sees them at their true worth, he can meet them adequately and so lay the groundwork for a true religious development. If he ignores them, his teaching, made up of abstract ideas and formulae, will make no appeal and have no effect.

II. Knowing one's subject does not make a teacher. It is a great mistake to give professional positions to men who are very scholarly, but who have never learnt to teach. Educational reformers today insist upon future professors at grammar schools and universities taking courses in pedagogy, applied psychology and practical courses.

The true qualifications for teaching, according to the experts in pedagogy, are not virtue, nor learning, nor culture. To know his subject is only one qualification of a good teacher. Personal experience, a valuable foundation, is not enough either ; it is always too limited and usually disastrous at the start. How can a teacher see, understand, imagine everything that has to be seen, understood, imagined, unless he is prepared ? The experience of others, past and present, can alone give us the required perspective. At the same time, our knowledge and our talents must be cultivated and directed scientifically, for it is pure romanticism to pride oneself on one's native wit. If the lay professorate demands such a long and careful preparation, how much more so the double vocation of catechist and instructor of the souls of youth.

A thorough didactic preparation involves three elements : 1) a knowledge of the pupil, of his mental age and his intellectual reactions to various bran-

ches of study ; 2) the didactic study of the matter to be taught and the determining of the order of exposition ; 3) a knowledge of the parallelism to be kept between the particular mental processus of the child and the processus of exposition of the subjectmatter itself ; the knowledge of the means to be employed to awaken the attention of the pupil and to help him to assimilate actively and progressively what he is taught. We must add the influence to be exerted on his affectivity.

The lack of this preparation in our teachers is only too obvious from the painful glaring failures we come across. It has been proved by facts. The desire for praise and a certain professional comradeship have often thrown a veil over the incompetence of religious teachers in the grammar schools. If professors of other subjects lack a similar adequate training, that is no excuse for religious teachers. The personality of the pupil is not seriously harmed by a deficiency in secular teaching, but a deficiency or negligence in giving religious instruction is extremely serious and may turn a person away from religion. The nature of the subject, the Christian spirit which should animate it and the example of the Divine Master, all demand a tactful, understanding approach to this training. The affective presentation of religious realities is most necessary when dealing with children at an age particularly open to affection and repelled by formalism and unreasonable tasks.

This modern approach to education should be adopted to religious teaching. The professors ought to get together and discuss the most appropriate methods and suggestions.

III. In pedagogy there is going on an investigation into the right method appropriate for each branch of study and for various ages. Much is still vague, but some clarification is emerging. The deductive *a priori* method is insufficient, for its results are neither certain nor scientifically proved. Therefore, experimentally we must seek new methods, or at least assure ourselves as scientifically as possible of the value of a method already being employed. In short, it is necessary in religious pedagogy to work along the line of concrete experience and to acquire the experimental mentality. That is to say, to compare traditional methods with modern as hypotheses and to verify the results.

This new scientific-didactic attitude is more rare in the matter of religious instruction than elsewhere. Old traditional methods are supreme ; some are good, even excellent, having stood the test of time. Others represent a decadent side of tradition. All are susceptible of being perfected.

However, there are some departments in which there are no traditions. The experience of the past does not tell us much about the subject of our present article : " Religious teaching in State schools. " These State schools are a creation of our day, classes made up partly of believers and partly of unbelievers, a subject without school sanction, only lasting for one hour a week, and in which religion is treated as one subject among many. The problem is a new one as regards syllabus, method, discipline, relation between pupils and masters. We have not yet met this situation by way of

humble seeking directives and proved methods. We are content to draw up syllabuses, compile manuals, and to keep discipline. We suggest prizes, we study so-called debates. We apply the formulae of a past age to a new situation and we try to profit by the experience obtained in different environments, such as schools run by religious.

Had we had a really experimental turn of mind, we would have defined the problem or problems, suggested hypotheses, checked the results and, by trial and error, would have reached more adequate conclusions. As it is, we have simply applied a priori assertions. Then criticisms were collected on certain aspects of the problem which did not fall in with one's preconceived solution. Personally, we consider that the syllabuses, manuals, lessons must be discussed in order to find the best solutions in each case, not discussed in a theoretical manner, but the results of carefully conducted experiments. We have put forward definite and concrete proposals on the subject. There can be no betterment of method except by this way which seems so difficult to enter upon.

IV. There is a final requirement of our times which we must take into consideration insofar as it influences the method of our teaching religion. This is the general desire, whether conscious or unconscious for a more human, more personal, I would even say, more existential approach to education. Instruction must be founded upon principles and nourished by them, but it must also take into account the existential reality of the student. In fact, the principal object is not learning, but the training of personal thought and will, capable of directing and renewing the life of the individual.

This tendency, on the plan of religious teaching, leads the master to stimulate his pupils to work for themselves and develop their own personalities instead of putting before them a cut-and-dried series of facts, often negative precepts, to learn by heart. Only thus can he give them rational, psychological and personal bases for their faith.

Religion is not a matter of doctrine only ; it is the living representation of the God Who responds to the heartfelt longings of youth, lightens the obscurity of life and appeases the anxiety felt by the human heart. The all too frequent inefficacy of religious teaching comes from the disharmony between the formalism of the classes and the living reality of the souls to be reached.

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# Christian Humanism in Religious Course

by Jean GUITTON

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*"Being ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you. But with modesty and fear, having a good conscience." I PETER, III, 15-16.*

It is hard to define briefly a "spirit": for the "spirit" of a work or an idea is always something of a presence and a fragrance, and one might say of it what is said of the word in the Epistle to the Hebrews: that it is "living and effectual... and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit... is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." One might well add that the "spirit" becomes manifest in good example given and is hardly separable from people. Here I am helped inwardly by the memory of several masters and friends who gave themselves to this loyal teaching in State schools, proving that this paradox is possible without injury either to the neutrality of the State or to the well-being of the Church.

First of all the memory comes to my mind of the chaplain of my Lycée, about 1910, the Abbé Voisin, killed at war in 1915. I was the youthful witness of a great sight, recalling the words of Bossuet: "le sacerdoce étroitement uni avec la magistrature, tout en paix par le concours de ces deux puissances." In the complicated milieu of the laicised and provincial French lycée, hardly recovered from an exhausting fight (*Combisme* was not yet dead), I used to see among the indifferent throng that soutane of which Barrès said about

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<sup>1</sup> Readers are acquainted with the previous articles in *Lumen Vitae* by Jean GUITTON, that attracted some attention: *Sources of Unbelief in Contemporary France* (II, 1947, n° 4); *Modern Thought and Catholicism* (IV, 1949, n° 1); *The Problem of Sex Enlightenment* (IV, 1949, n° 4). — Address: 22, rue Roumieux, Montpellier, FRANCE (Editor's note).



that time, that it was the uniform of high moral preoccupation. The Abbé had got his dress recognized as the sign of help, not of intrusion. He brought with him the presence of a mystery, of pure conscience, of the idea of a destiny of which the majority were conscious in their inmost depths. After his death a Protestant professor thus expressed it : " His faith was rich and deep, very much aware of itself and clearly defined, but so full of life and charity, so broad that it was an intellectual treat to cross swords with him in discussion." In fact, about the Abbé Voisin, who had been ill for a long time and then afterwards lived on his reserve strength, there was an unforgettable ring of authenticity in everything he said to us. He would have nothing to do with anything that did not come from the living depths of our nature, however young we were, and this led him before the war of 1914, before the liturgical revival that is to say, to make us recite the prayers of the Mass in French ; and I can still hear him at the altar, slowing down so as to allow the slow repetition of his scholars to keep up with him. And I can also hear him giving us in the third class about 1912 a course on evolution in which he showed us clearly that man's body might indeed descend from that of a monkey, provided that the soul came from God. I append in a note an example of the simple, discreet and bold solutions given by him in the cases of conscience which followed so inevitably from the repercussions of Church and State, the clashes between lay " instruction " and religious " education." <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> When I was thirteen, a professor, who was much esteemed, advised me to widen my reading and lent me *The Disciple* by Paul Bourget, a book of sound morality but containing some erotic pages. This alarmed my mother and she wrote to the chaplain of the Lycée, then at the Front. He replied : (to her :)

" Surprised like you and saddened by the reading advised in the second class : no, a child, a youth even of 16, should not be given *The Disciple*. He will not see what Bourget wishes to emphasize and his imagination will be fired by other things which he ought to learn only gradually.

Why show him the feelings which it is in God's plan that man should have for woman and vice versa, first of all under their evil aspect, in an illegitimate form ? Perhaps because they are no longer thought of as wrong because so frequent. It is here that I feel so vividly the inevitable connection between instruction and education, and how false the theory is which leaves the professor the sole task of instruction and education to the family.

You know me well enough, Madam, not to think this a criticism ; I imagine that war with all its horrors is not nor will not be the most important happening of our generation. There are changes in social life which may have greater effects, and I call from my heart for a reform in the training of children and young people in France : a transformation of the teaching service. Is the Church in France to-day in a position to give that instruction on which a man has the right to insist for his children ? Most certainly the State is not in the position to provide the education

He often repeated with a slight smile words which he said were spoken by Thiers : " The Church only hinders from thinking those who are not capable of it," which gave us all a thrill.

All this happened in far-off days, but what was the exception then has now become more general, as the influence of the State in scholastic matters has become greater in all nations. And one may here point out some of the features which religious teaching ought to present in the schools whose atmosphere is neutral.

It would not be correct to say that the religious professor in a State school should teach something different. He does not impart another religion, another Gospel ; only he must teach this Gospel from an especial standpoint, giving a definite point and emphasis. Certainly his pupils have the Faith through their baptism and the will of their parents. But they are living in abnormal surroundings for such tender plants, not in a protected garden under the sun of the one Faith, but surrounded by indifference, silence about their Faith, sometimes by a veiled hostility to it, and amidst unbelievers who are their comrades and masters ; unbelievers whom they like and (which is disconcerting) whom they recognise as such and admire. It is inevitable that they should put the question to themselves : Are my Catholic masters superior to my nonbelieving ones on any count that I can verify in my adolescent experience ? That is to say, on the ground of sympathy, human qualities, loyalty, discretion, benevolence, work, peacefulness, laborious and sincere

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which many families desire. And if the separation between instruction and education is as evil a system as I think it to be, something else must be found to take its place : this will not happen without trouble, without a fight, and will take longer than the present fighting, although less murderous.

While we await this event from which your grandchildren will benefit, we must make the best we can of things as they are for your sons' sake, and take into account the surroundings in which they live and are trained : you cannot stop them from reading such books as are recommended by their professors. Would it not be better to read them together ? to choose out some passages in the book after having explained their trend ; — and above all, prepare them to profit by the teaching and situations which they will come across, or at any rate to assimilate them without moral hurt : difficult, yes. But what a fine work for a mother, and how proud her son will be of her when he is twenty !

It is not out of place thus to talk of education while thirty metres from here in the field alongside they are trying out bombs for use in the trenches : here everything speaks of death. I am delighted to talk of life and above all of the true life, the moral life. You will see in this, Madam, a sign of my attachment to your son and my respectful regard for you."

seeking after truth ? Are they greater or less taken as men than the others ?

Such criteria are not really sound, for the truth of a doctrine is not to be judged by the worthiness or bearing of him who puts it before you ; and it is not because a professor of religion is a good footballer that one should believe Christ to be in the midst of us, or because he is clumsy, severe, morose, that one is let off going to mass. But adolescents are like crowds : they form their judgments by what they can see. Besides are they so very wrong ? One may lay down as a rule that the religious course ought to be as good as the best of the secular courses. The truth of the *doctrine* should not suffer from the badness of the method or from its presentation.

In accommodating the teaching to the capacity of children or adolescents, one must never forget that the child of today will be the man of tomorrow and that he will remember ; the necessary formulas and cut-and-dried matter must be reduced to a minimum ; the "socratic" method made use of when required ; interest must be aroused and maintained, and even (without overdoing it) the heart attacked and the pupils drawn to the master by their affections so as to detach them from themselves and so to lead them to their one and only Interior Master. Herein lie the qualities of the ideal master, qualities hard to cultivate, but which we ought all of us to desire, the religious teacher in the highest degree.

It must be obvious to everyone that these qualities are all but indispensable in the religious professor in a State school, because of the shrewd comparisons which his pupils make between him and the others.

In particular, it is clear that human interests must be given a place almost as large as the consideration of divine things in order to show that the path from man to the infinite depth of God passes through the depths of man. It is not possible in this place to give advice which would apply in every circumstance. But one may remark that when teaching *sacred history*, the professor of our dreams will take great care not to mix up marvels with miracles, not to insist too much on the miraculous as such, but to point out the religious teaching contained by it. That is to revert to the teaching of S. Paul.<sup>3</sup>

The child in the secular school must not be taught to give the

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<sup>3</sup> "For what things soever were written, were written for our learning : that through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." *Rom.*, XV, 4 ; cf. *II Tim.*, III, 16.

same value to the passage of the Red Sea as to the Resurrection, to the tree of Paradise as to the Tree of the Cross, or else, when he discovers good reasons for not giving credence to the absolute historicity of the former (and his secular teachers will soon point them out to him), he will also doubt the veracity of the Gospels.<sup>4</sup>

Catechism must return to the catechetical spirit. It would appear to be an indispensable precaution to take out all words not in the child's vocabulary.<sup>5</sup>

As for higher grade teaching of religion, there are several methods available. But we must here insist on the need for the use of induction rather than theorems and theses, of foundations already familiar, human knowledge, human and even contemporary aspirations. Every nation has its great men of letters or thinkers who were inspired by the Christian Faith. Pascal is the most significant for France, and he is perhaps the leader of all those who have wanted to be at the same time geometricians, humans, Christians not shut off from the world. A teacher of religion should make a study of these men who are "builders of bridges and roads," priests of modern times, free of both camps. He will find in them the principles of lofty teaching and his sense of the appropriate will teach him how to adapt them according to circumstances.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> We would here recommend *L'Histoire sainte racontée à mes filleuls* (Sacred History told to my children) by DANIEL-ROPS.

<sup>5</sup> We have attempted this in our brochure *Conseils à deux enfants de France* (Éditions provençales, Aix) with a preface by Cardinal GERLIER.

<sup>6</sup> Cardinal Suhard's recommendations are here to the point, given a few days before his death to Catholic intellectuals (May 1949): "It is therefore necessary for the Christian to look at all things by the light of his Faith, but at the same time he must use his reason as a man, or he will fail in his essential task. I should like to dwell on this latter aspect. A merely elementary knowledge of the Faith and a rapid survey of the course of the Church throughout the ages will suffice to prove that Christianity, so far from limiting human thought on earth, has always inspired and guaranteed it. Christianity is master of free thought and, in face of the tendencies which desire to reduce Faith in Christ to a blind adhesion destructive of the intelligence, the Church has always stood firm. In the same way, the Lord has not conceived of his Church in the world as a theocracy dominating temporal things, nor does He put before us a Faith which would be a kind of imperialistic monopoly of thought, demanding its sanction for every word spoken in the human sphere.

You know this better than anyone: if there is a necessary interaction between Faith and reason, if Christ and the Church have a supreme part in education as in the exercise of intelligence, there is none the less a definite duty for the Christian, and especially for the intellectual Christian, to study every problem with a bold and vigorous mind, with even freer scientific objectivity.

The Faith should never be a school of timidity or narrowness of outlook. If the Lord is the Word, that does not mean the suppression or fettering of all research



Great pedagogical attempts have been made, especially in countries with a Protestant tradition, to make schools more alive, less passive. The "socratic" method has been rediscovered, and also that of the Jesuit Fathers of the old school in their colleges. Henceforward the man of the future is to be trained by contact with reality, by directed initiative, by imitating grown men. In this way the class becomes a workshop with a sage as director.

Of course there is no question of transporting these methods bodily into religious instruction, of which a part is necessarily made up of "revelation" and established dogma, but we must let ourselves be guided by them to a certain extent, associating the pupil in an active manner with the lesson. This is all the more important in that religious instruction in many countries is an optional course, given outside the ordinary timetable horarium, sometimes outside the school buildings and not with the official sanction of the university. The hours for it are always limited, which forces the master to go too fast, as though engaged in a race. But every obstacle can act as a spur and the lack of time (which after all, is the character of all our earthly life) forces one to find means of using what there is of it to the full.

We should here emphasize the point that religious teaching is bound up with its practice. And from this aspect the Church, even though its power is lessened, has a great advantage over the State as educator. The latter has no cult, nor liturgy, nor altar stone. It has no sacraments; there are no *saints* and its ceremonies as well as its heroes are lacking in *depth*. In the most recent and best treatise on lay pedagogy which has been published in French, M. Hubert, the eminent rector of the University of Strasburg, remarks in several places that piety must be the aim of the education of the heart; he defines piety as gratitude for our existence and a will to collaborate with the work of all beings.<sup>7</sup> Doubtless, as Pierre Mesnard justly remarks, this definition is incomplete from the point

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and all intellectual progress, but the power of raising up, of enlightening, all human effort.

The silence of God leaves human thought its proper sphere. Christ our Lord has never sought to take away from man his reasoning powers and his power of directing himself by his own efforts. You know, we do not find in the Gospel that all the answers are given by Heaven, but man is left free to discover things for himself in the world of science, philosophy, social teaching, art, civilisation.

And from this it follows that the unfolding is a slow process. Christ has not willed to anticipate the necessary and gradual work of the centuries."

<sup>7</sup> *Traité de pédagogie générale*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1946.

of view of the Faith.<sup>8</sup> But it does indicate that religious teaching begins at the very point reached by the utmost effort of secular education : what is piety if not respect, emotion before the unknown, the will to be united mysteriously to it ?

If religious teaching in the State schools must harmonize its methods with those of the State, it must, too, lead on to the sacramental and mystical life. Every religious class begins with prayer : that is enough to create a different atmosphere. Every religious class must finally, sooner or later, end in a mystical banquet at which master and pupils communicate in the same Reality full of mystery. We have here an element of formation of the whole man which many lay teachers envy us, for true education must knit together soul, mind and body. It relies on speech, but should also know how to keep silence. And where but in the religious class can one learn to be silent ?

There is another and quite different snare and that is of taking the easy worldly way and avoid all questions which touch on the supernatural, to give religious teaching of the moral and rational type ; in the manner of the *Vicaire savoyard* or of *Jocelyn*. It is a great mistake to think that by taking away its substance from any Faith we shall secure it a warmer welcome from a hostile or lay audience. On the contrary, those outside require of us that we should be wholly and really what we lay claim to. In particular, they expect that the priest should correspond to their notion, often a very exalted one, of what a priest should be.

All these are reasons why the bishop must be careful in his choice

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<sup>8</sup> *Cahiers universitaires catholiques*, octobre 1949. M. Pierre Mesnard, à propos of M. Hubert's book, says very truly : " The problem which M. Hubert sets the Catholic conscience is once again the transit from lay humanism to Christian. Whatever may be the abyss separating these two conceptions, we must recognise that with our author the principal difficulty felt by our usual lay inquirers is here avoided. M. Hubert's humanism is not a *locked* humanism which categorically refuses any noteworthy extension. To our mind the importance which he attaches to moral and religious education constitutes a real progress and shows a tendency which his timid suggestions as to transcendence allow us to think of as favourable. Besides, his values are far from shocking to the principles of our Faith. In declaring several times that Christian beliefs are at the heart of western civilisation, M. Hubert invites sincere agnostics to recognise and respect them. He seems to us to set the tone needed by the French school, the official neutrality of which does not hinder its being attended by a majority of believers. It is up to us to show by our behaviour and our real love that the cross of Christ is not purely a symbol, but a truth which is always spreading ; and that the catholicity of the Church is a real attribute of universality which cannot be curbed either by racial prejudices nor the repetition of narrow preconceptions. "

of the man to whom he entrusts the religious course. It concerns one of those rare points in his diocese where contact is made, if not with the leaders of Unbelief, at least with those who accept their views. Everything in fact depends on his first choice, which is a difficult one to make, for as a rule the seminary student does not gain the sort of experience necessary for the post. And among various kinds of sanctity a Francis de Sales will fit in better than either a Benedict Labre or even a Curé of Ars.

The chaplain needs a broadness of mind, but also a patient tenacity which is able to defend the rights which the malice of the age strives to restrict. To have been through the last war is an asset, but weakness of body may do more than blundering boldness. A constant search for contacts, an untiring discernment of what is and is not possible and of what is necessary, a love of his own times, a cultivated taste — and, above all, the sense of what it is not fitting to say, although it may be true, a kind of politeness or good breeding, the art of self effacement at the right time, in fact what Newman claimed for a “gentleman” when he said that “the gentleman is never narrow minded in a discussion, never listens to calumnies nor tale-telling, does not attribute base motives to those who enter into conflict with him and thinks the best of everything.”

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# Imparting a Liking for Religion and Christianity

by Canon Jacques LECLERCQ

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It is obvious that the object of a religious course is to teach religion. But there are many aspects of this, and the field is wide. The salient points are not the same everywhere ; the religious course in the State schools must be adapted to the audience and to the locality.

The surroundings have been dealt with in an earlier article of this issue. We need not repeat the subject, except to bear in mind some fundamental facts.

In most of the countries where Catholics form a sufficiently large percentage of the population the Church has its own schools and the practising Catholics normally send their children to them. The pupils attending the State schools are therefore usually from poor or indifferent Catholic homes. There are two exceptions : fervent Catholics who are attending the school for a particular reason, and non-Catholics who are coming to the instructions also for some particular reason. But the atmosphere of the class is supplied by the majority of lukewarm Catholics.

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1. Born of a family steeped in the old liberal tradition, Canon LECLERCQ has become one of the most representative masters of Catholic thought, as he excels in presenting the inexhaustible Christian treasure in a manner adapted to the longings of the modern world.

His *Essais de Morale* primarily show us : in religion, the life intimacy with the Man-God ; in morals, the effort of fidelity to one Person ; in the Church, the Mystical Body. The depth of his inspiration is allied to a very acute sense of life itself in all his works, especially in : *Le mariage chrétien*, *Le Problème de la foi dans les milieux intellectuels du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Culture et personne*.

A realist, Canon LECLERCQ is also a poet, as he shows himself to be in *Sainte Catherine de Sienne* », *Saint François de Sales*, etc... In a recently published volume : *Dialogue de l'Homme et de Dieu*, the eminent Louvain Professor delivers the essential point of his message. — Address : 82, Avenue des Alliés, Louvain, BELGIUM (Editor's note).



One cannot count upon any previous religious training. There are, of course, exceptions, but on the whole, even if any instruction has been given, it has been in such circumstances that the Christian spirit has not penetrated. The first problem, then, is to find out what must be imparted as a preliminary.

Our first object must be to impart *a liking for and knowledge of religion*, and next *of the Christian religion*.

These two aims cannot be pursued consecutively in a logical order, but both together, psychologically. It most frequently happens that the religious sense is acquired by contact with some actual religion, in this case, Christianity.

To arrive at this, the pupils must derive from the course the impression that religion is something great, noble, pure, that to be a Christian is the fulfilment of one's whole being, and if they become convinced that to be a Christian is the greatest good in life, then a primary object has been attained, for they will then want to study Christianity and will give the whole course a sympathetic hearing.

But, for this, the master must dwell on the fundamental aspect of Christianity, on Christ Who leads us to God, and on the main lines along which the Christian must order his life. Of course the wideawake or critical pupils will immediately raise the objection that Christians do not live like that. The answer is that the individual Christian does not make Christianity, and that they are being invited to learn how to act differently.

Some of the pupils have not the Faith or will lose it. The course in religion is not the only influence to which they are being submitted, and however perfectly it may be given, it cannot always counterbalance other and more constant pressures. But it is possible to convey such an impression that when later on the pupil hears religion charged with deceit, narrowness, archaism, he will protest that he was not taught anything of that nature at school, but that he was given lessons in nobility and breadth of outlook.

We cannot here enter into details, nor suggest a syllabus (which in any case must vary according to age), but *some general lines* may be laid down to be followed.

The modern syllabus of religious instruction is designed for Christian children, living amid Christian surroundings, with a religious foundation, and has as its object, not only the teaching of doctrine and morals but also the imparting of a religious know-

ledge which shall enable them to hold their own in a religious society.

Now this scheme is of no value in a State school. There the pupils must be given a knowledge of religious and Christian standards, and, more often than not, there is no opportunity for anything further ; but if that object can be attained, the essential point has been gained.

The method of the gospels must be reverted to for this purpose, that is to say, to teach the meaning of life and of redemption, rather than give theological formulae.

When Our Lord speaks of supernatural life, He teaches His disciples that they are united to Him in the intimate and real way that a vine and its branches are united, that His life passes through them as the sap flows through the plant ; but He does not give them any theological definition. The essential thing is to know that we have in us divine life through Christ. To know exactly in what this consists is secondary, and to know wherein lies the difference between Catholic and Calvinist doctrine is of very little importance, for the greater number of the pupils will not assimilate it and will only get an impression of something extremely abstract and unreal.

Divine life and its benefits must be spoken of ; and the master must know his theology in order that his teaching may be orthodox. He must show them this divine life as a free gift from divine love, and this will lead to treating of the love of God for men and the love which is in God and is His essence, the chief characteristic of the divine perfection as revealed by Christ. He must go on to show that this love calls for our collaboration, that men must respond to the divine love, and that there is, then, a flow of love from God to man and back again. The master has to demonstrate that God is in our whole life, which is transformed by His action in us, and that, by this supernatural life or life of grace, we become capable of a greatness to which we cannot attain without it. If, possessing this life of grace, we live as though we had it not, if the Christian does not manifest the light which is in him to the world, as a lamp does its light, then he is unworthy of possessing that life, etc. The master must certainly know his theology, but it is a fallacy to suppose that the faithful ought to turn into theologians.

Take the Mass, too. Its significance must be pointed out, the love to which it is a witness, the place which it should hold in the Christian's life. Its beauty as a rite, the meaning of the various parts, the way in which the liturgical year expresses the whole history of the Church and the Christian tradition right back to

the times of Christ, all this is needful to be expounded. But it is useless to give detailed instructions on such things as the rubrics, the liturgical colours, or, even if the obligation of hearing Mass on Sundays is mentioned, it should not be made the chief point of the lesson. The important thing is to know the Mass, to admire it, to love it ; but to teach that attendance at Mass is compulsory without making it loved, is a bad piece of work. Still more is it unwise to dwell on the time it is necessary to arrive for attendance to be valid, or to discourse upon when one should kneel, rise or sit. All that is but Christian "savoir faire" ; he who loves his Mass will soon learn those things, and if he makes a few mistakes at first, God will not take account of it provided his piety is sincere ; whereas, lacking piety, no correctness of attitude will suffice.

What we have just written may be summed up in the formula : put religion before theology and morality before canon law.

Religion is, above all, life and the knowledge of this life must be imparted before the technical formulæ of theology. Similarly, *morality* is the essence of the Christian life ; canon law is there merely to sustain it ; to put canon law before morality or to teach it to the faithful who do not know what is right and wrong is pure nonsense. The obligation of Sunday Mass, of Friday abstinence, etc. are reasonable and simple for the Christian who knows what his religion stands for, but they repel rather than attract the uninformed when undue emphasis is laid on such outward observances and the inner meaning is left untouched. They are given the impression that the Sunday Mass and the Friday abstinence are the important things, rather than the place of the Mass in the Christian's life and the necessity of a spirit of penance and mortification. Possibly one may deal differently with children who are already familiar with these ideas, but in any case such a method would be undesirable at a State school.

Moreover, the teachers at the State schools need not imagine that their situation is very exceptional when compared with that of those at the Catholic schools ; one is apt to be under an illusion as to the Christianity of the pupils at the latter, taken as a whole. One of the reasons for the "leakage" among children from Catholic schools is the arbitrary nature of the instruction they received, the way in which parrot-phrases and rules of conduct are imposed without explanation and with no attempt at making them valued for their own sakes.

Christian morality is grounded in Charity and it is this, supported by Faith, which gives its real character to the Christian life. Now Charity is given a subordinate place in the present code of instruction.

When it is desired to raise the standard of Christian morality among those who are judged to be already animated with its spirit, the morality of the decalogue is made the basis of the teaching, and this provides plenty of problems of application. On the other hand, with children who have no Christian foundation on which to build, it is necessary first to stress the Gospel morality.

"Thou shalt not kill, steal," etc. is not distinctively Christian morality; but Christ said "They will know you by this that ye have love one to another." The *theological virtues* must therefore be the pegs on which to hang the teaching of morality at the State schools.

But here again, it is not the theological definitions and divisions of these virtues that matters, but their practical application. It is certainly an excellent thing to make clear that Faith and Charity draw their efficacy and strength from their being referred immediately to God, and His presence in us. But then, the essential question still remains : to what do they engage us ?

We should not go on increasing distinctions and classifications : the ten commandments, four cardinal virtues, seven capital sins, etc. ; we should rather concentrate on the type of character expected of a disciple of Christ. And full time must be given to this. The pupil judges the importance of a subject by the number of lessons devoted to it. It is no use asserting that Charity is the greatest commandment and then take up a whole lesson in teaching the duty of almsgiving, nor to enter into lengthy descriptions of the rules for and behaviour of the penitent at Confession ; what is required is to show how Charity concerns the whole of life. This will lead, especially with the older pupils, to the treatment of many things, including even social questions. Even for the little ones there are many ways of showing how Charity affects their surroundings and what fraternity really implies.

As we have said, it very often happens that the pupils hear arguments against religion among their families and friends. They come to class with *objections* which have been suggested to them.

In this event, the master must keep control and not allow himself to be submerged under a flood of unimportant criticisms, or the main and essential part of his teaching will be lost to view. It



is a weakness of Catholics and of apologetics that they so often adopt a defensive attitude, refuting objections as they are launched at them and so letting the essential Christian doctrine be blurred.

Objections are nearly always directed at matters of detail ; seldom at the essentials of the Faith. The best way to deal with, for example, the story of the Garden of Eden is to observe that one is not a Christian because of it, but being a Christian because we are followers of Christ, we accept the consequences. Or if the Virgin Birth is called in question, we reply that belief in the adult Christ comes first, that we do not believe in Christ because of the Virgin Birth, but we believe the Virgin Birth because we believe in Christ ; we can then show that the disciples themselves only came to know later of the Virgin Birth. This line is better than long and detailed explanations of doctrine.

To the arguments against the Church, her outworn beliefs, her money grubbing, etc. it is easy to reply that one is not a Catholic because of these things, and that all good Catholics regret abuses and seek to rectify them where they exist.

These simple and sensible answers usually put the audience in a favourable disposition to be shown where the criticisms are exaggerations ; but in any case one must be careful not to waste time on these irrelevancies. If, for instance, a child quotes a sneer at the uniform of the Swiss guards or the dress of the Monsignori at the Vatican, a shrug of the shoulders and a remark that such trifles don't matter much and that they are traditions which may pass away, is quite enough notice to take, and the master should go on to say that religion is quite a different affair and concerned with for more important things.

It is quite possible to use arguments and objections as a means of developing a Christian outlook. But to achieve this the master must himself have very clear ideas and a good sense of proportion.

Finally, a last remark must be made on the subject of the *implications of the Christian life*.

In our day, social questions have become urgent in every sphere of life, and we cannot neglect the social aspect of human activity. The Church has been forced to intervene in order to give a lead to Christians.

This question of social teaching from the Christian point of view must come in ; yet it is a delicate one in the State schools, since political and social action are so closely united.

In this matter the situation varies in different countries ; in

England and North America the Church is quite independent of political parties, but in the Latin nations as a whole Catholics have been led by circumstances to form a party supported by the Church more or less openly. However, nowhere does the Church make adhesion to a particular political party a condition of membership.

Catholic pupils are usually drawn from all parties, and the master must be exceedingly careful in his teaching on social questions never to seem to favour the tenets of any one political school in particular. The chief thing for him is to keep to the moral aspect, as does the Church, to cultivate a Christian spirit. He should have as aim that his pupils finish the course with the clear conviction that the duty of a Christian is to promote human brotherhood in every sphere of action, to make a stand against the barriers raised by pride or self interest between peoples and classes, always to take the part of the defenceless, to strive that all may develop themselves to the full, and to take the broad Christian view of life rather than subscribe to that of the individual or group of individuals. In this way the pupils will form a high opinion of Christianity even though they themselves may fall short of its standards.

It follows from the above sketch that Christian teaching is the sowing of the seed. The religious course is intended, not to get them to go to Mass on Sundays and abstain on Fridays, but to get them to admire the Christian religion and want to be Christians. That is the best way to have them live as Christians. The teaching is for life and not for immediate tangible results. It is far better to have men of forty with a longing for the fine things learnt in youth than to have boys of fifteen going to Mass reluctantly and dropping the practice as soon as they leave school.

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# The Religion Course as a Preparation for Catholic Action

by X. - M. DELBECQ  
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To be genuine and sincere, an exposition of the Christian Message cannot be presented purely theoretically, nor as a sheer consideration of the mysteries of God and man. It must lead to action ; and not only to action within oneself, but to the *apostolate*.

Indeed the apostolate springs from the faith as the fruit from the flower, — provided it is not thwarted.

The Christian's Credo, writes Canon Dondeyne, is not a series of dead formulae ; it is a profession of Faith that should *inspire* and *guide* our daily life and give to our every action its meaning and significance. Two centuries of rationalism and individualism have resulted in dissociating Faith and the apostolate, so that now we have two degrees of Christian perfection, the first of which is strictly necessary, whilst the second is looked upon as a sort of extra. Such an outlook is in contradiction not only with the very essence of the Faith, but also with the structure of the human being. In a word, the apostolate is essential to a sincere Faith.<sup>2</sup>

We will not develop the proof of this statement, as the reader will find it in the work we have just quoted. If you grant that the Faith gives us the highest *values* in life and that, in the words of Le Senne, "all values are contagious," you will have to admit that a Faith not radiating its light is only a shadow-Faith.

Is not this what Pius XII recently recalled to the youth of Italian Catholic Action :

A strong, live, active Faith. Your Faith cannot be strong and luminous unless you know it, not superficially or confusedly, but clearly and intimately.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Lumen Vitae*, III (1948), n° 4. — Adresse : Mont-Saint-Martin, 21, Liège, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

<sup>2</sup> A. DONDEYNE, *L'intellectuel chrétien*, Louvain, Édit. des Équipes universitaires de la J. E. C., p. 31.

It will be live, if you live by its maxims, if you keep the commandments of God.

And note carefully that if it is not live, your Faith will not be active. If others go to so much trouble in the cause of evil, how much greater should be your zeal for the cause of God, of Christ, and the Church. <sup>3</sup>

An exposition of the mysteries of the Faith and a rousing up of this Faith in the souls of the faithful should, therefore, stimulate a desire for the apostolate as a natural consequence.

Now, historical conditions and the urgent appeals of the Sovereign Pontiffs put Catholic Action in the foreground of the apostolic tasks of laymen.

Catholic Action is "an apostolate whose very name shows its universal nature, its transcendent importance, its pressing necessity," <sup>4</sup> said the present Holy Father at the beginning of his pontificate.

Catholic Action is nowhere more necessary than in the State schools. Whether it be in secondary or technical schools, it is there that a large number of the country's future leaders is trained. This training is given in an atmosphere that is "neutral" and among young people whose principles and attitude toward their Faith are negative.

Do they not run the risk, if not of being led to take a stand in denial of Christian teaching, at least of falling into the temptation to lead a double life : pagan in the secular sphere ; religious, perhaps, but a purely ritualistic religion ? <sup>5</sup>

It is precisely to this double danger that the Popes of these last 70 years have drawn attention. And so they have invited laymen to give the example of a fully Christian life, showing the practical application of their Faith in the details of private, family and social life.

This apostolate, remarks Pius XII, ought to be exercised not only in the world, but as it were by means of the world, and therefore through the professions and all those forms of activity of a secular nature. <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> September 12, 1948. See : *Doc. Cath.*, 7 nov. 1948, col. 1413. Cited by R. KOTHEN, *Les directives de S. S. Pie XII concernant l'A. C.*, Louvain, 1949, pp. 26 ss.

<sup>4</sup> Disc. à des Aumôniers d'Action Catholique, 15 juin 1939. Cited by R. KOTHEN, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> A. DONDEYNE, *op. laud.*, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> *Motu proprio*, March 12, 1948, quoted by R. KOTHEN, p. 25.



For Pius XI, Catholic Action for the young students in secondary State schools was obviously required.<sup>7</sup>

It is then, at school and in the religious doctrine class that the *preparation* for Catholic Action should be broached :

Since the future lies in the hands of youth, and in particular in the hands of the young student, it is to them above all that we must devote our most careful efforts, in order that by means of a fitting formation and the practice of their religion, their souls may be stirred to an enthusiasm for the great and holy causes of the Church,—an enthusiasm rooted in conviction, which, their refuge and salvation in the maelstrom of the passions of youth, will at the same time assure for Catholic Action first-class leaders and soldiers for the conquests of the future.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps you will object : “ Catholic Action makes such demands that our young people in State schools, who for the most part come from not very Christian families are unfitted to undertake it. What then is the use of preparing them for it ? ” That would be wrong, for *all* Christians are called to the ranks of Catholic Action.

Pius XII reminds us :

The duty of promoting, to the best of our power, the coming of God’s kingdom is one binding upon all who have been called into that kingdom, and out of Satan’s power, by their regeneration at the font.<sup>9</sup>

The Pope puts it before us as a duty for everyone who has been baptized. Can we then permit its importance and obligation to be passed over in silence under the pretext that not all will respond to our appeal ? Do we refuse to teach the sixth commandment, even though we know that not everyone of our pupils is a St. Aloysius ?

Moreover, common sense urges us to give the course this bent. The religion course should be a message hot with life : “ sermo Dei vivus et efficax et penetrabilior gladio ancipite. ”<sup>10</sup>

We must make known the Christian life in its sublime beauty.

<sup>7</sup> “ It is not enough that centres of C. A. arise beside the Universities and the secondary public schools. It is also necessary that centres be multiplied in all colleges and houses of education. ” Letter to Mgr. Perdoms concerning C.A. in Colombia, February 14, 1934. Reprinted in the Acts of the Council of Malines.

<sup>8</sup> Pius XI, *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Enc. *Summi Pontificatus*, October 20, 1939. Cf. R. KOTHEN, p. 11. cf. Enc. *Corporis Mystici*, June 20, 1943, and the letter to Cardinal Piazza, October 11, 1946, quoted by R. KOTHEN, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Heb.*, IV, 12.

Now the Christian life supposes, under pain of mutilation, a charity blossoming into the apostolate.<sup>11</sup>

Boldness will no doubt be necessary, for youth does not *seem* to want strong spiritual food. Yet many of them hunger for it, and philosophical, moral and religious problems provide the topic of conversation more often than one imagines.<sup>12</sup>

If the religion course is to present the Christian message in its true light, it must not let it be supposed that Catholic Action is a matter of option. It must show its many deep connections with the various articles of the Faith. It should lead to Catholic Action as Faith becomes a readiness to do the will of God.

Preparation for Catholic Action by means of the religion course will consist, not so much in an *ex professo* exposition of this subject,<sup>13</sup> but rather in a spirit<sup>14</sup> which ought to animate the whole programme of religious instruction. This spirit will manifest itself in the way one regards the students, presents the subject matter and prepares the classes.

Students alas ! do not always want an advanced course. Many of them have only weak beliefs and they attend the religion course only because it is their parents' will. Nevertheless, we must love them *per fas et nefas*. Each one of them possesses a soul that was bought by the blood of Christ.<sup>15</sup> It is well worth the blood of our unflinching patience. And in every class there are good honest souls.

All are the constant objects of God's grace : our presence among

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<sup>11</sup> A. DONDEYNE, *op. laud.*, p. 32.

<sup>12</sup> Allow me to cite these recent reflections of a university student à propos of the religion course he received in college : " Throughout the country our militants view with sad regret the sterility of the religion course, potentially so important, as a source of religious life.

When the religion course awakens the religious life of our students, as it ought to do, instead of surrounding its remnants with a few theoretical concepts that have no link with it, then the apostolate will be discovered.

Today there is no greater scarcity of an elite than previously, but there is a scarcity of Christian life — and the apostolate is evidently a function of the latter.

Now the Christian life ought to be able to find its great opportunity in the religion course.

If Catholic Action is not the extension of priestly activity, if the priest does not cease to be an optional distributor of religious ideas, Catholic Action extends nothing at all and the whole thing is a total failure. "

<sup>13</sup> The recent programme of the Inspectors of Secondary Education published in Belgium reserves this exposition to the Senior class.

<sup>14</sup> See the beginning of the preceding article by J. GUITTON.

<sup>15</sup> *I Cor.*, VI, 20.

them is a sign of this.<sup>16</sup> The situation of these young men is dramatic: are they not all "called,"<sup>17</sup> responsible for the welcome that they will accord to the divine grace brought to them by the priest who addresses them? Responsible and "*embarqués*," to use Pascal's word. They are perhaps unconscious of the drama of their life: it is for us to awaken them to it. They are perhaps, like Jacob, wrestling with an Angel and resisting God's call: a spiritual struggle "harder than battling with man." We have to help them in this struggle whose victorious crown is a happy surrender to God.

The exposition of religion cannot, therefore, at any moment be reduced to a beautiful theory; however attractive to the mind, it cannot appeal to the mind alone. Rather it must lead to a *choice*, or rather to a series of acts; it must lead to the Living God who has said: "He who is not with me is against me."<sup>18</sup>

The drama of the Christian message will appear if it is given *integrally*, for then it appears in all its austere and elevating beauty. A truncated Christianity never converted anyone. The memoirs of converts offer sufficient proof of this. Let us not forget Claudel's words to Jacques Rivière: "Don't believe those who say that youth is made to amuse itself: youth is not made for pleasure, it is made for heroism."<sup>19</sup>

The master truths must be duly stressed<sup>20</sup> and Christianity must be presented as a *value*, the supreme value in life.<sup>21</sup> "Faith is more than a speculative judgment, it is a *judgment of value*, a practical way of looking at the world and at life from God's viewpoint, a *Weltanschauung* with God at the centre."<sup>22</sup> The numerous influences to which the student is subject outside his religion course and his participation in divine worship exalt beyond reason profane and purely earthly values. It is for us to show, not the emptiness of these values, but their decay, if they are not sustained, enlightened, harmonized by the vision of Christian truth.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "The Lord follows His preachers: because the word of the preacher leads the way, and the Lord comes into the sanctuary of our soul when words of exhortation have preceded Him: and in this way truth is received into the soul." St. GREGORY, *Hom. 17 in Evang.*, Brev. in Com. Evangelistarum.

<sup>17</sup> *Eph.*, IV, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Matt. XII, 30.

<sup>19</sup> Paul CLAUDEL, *Toi qui es-tu ?*, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> J. LECLERCQ, *Le problème de la foi*.

<sup>21</sup> This is precisely the proposal incorporated into the programme of the Inspectors of Secondary State schools, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> A. DONDEYNE, *op. laud.*, p. 14.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. J. GUITTON, *supra*.

Thus presented, Christianity — if it is accepted — becomes a crusade,<sup>24</sup> for once a man has realized and acknowledged that all humanity is involved in the drama, he immediately sees that he cannot be content with saving his own soul.

To induce the student to make a choice is, of course, to force him to say "Yes" or "No." And a "No" in this context is terrifying. Yet we must resign ourselves to this prospect or else we shall betray the Master. Remember the episode of the rich young man in the Gospel.<sup>25</sup> Our Lord, seeing him go away, does not call him back to say He had exaggerated, that there is a cheap way of saving oneself, because that is impossible. Many teachers have confided to us this torment, but it is inevitable. It is the price of our liberty. An dit is compensated for by the "Yes" of those whom grace awakens and transforms.

The choice towards which the young Christian is led, must, in order to bring him to the modern apostolate of Catholic Action, be directed by the conviction of certain fundamental aspects of Christian reality that need to be emphasized. I mean those which justify the basic attitudes of every Christian apostle. Moreover, they become clear in a more profound view of the mystery of the Redemption. The Christian-apostle has understood that the Redemption is not "a passing, transitory act," but a divine work "which lasts throughout history and to which each of us is invited to bring our contribution."<sup>26</sup> Convinced that he cooperates with the Christ whom he loves as a friend, the Christian is proud of his Faith, and feels himself bound to the whole of humanity, whose struggles he follows with that realism characteristic of the apostolate, exerting himself, as a grateful son of the Church, to bring forward the riches of doctrine and of power dispensed by her.

To awaken the love of the living Christ and that "contact of man with man" of which Canon Leclercq speaks,<sup>27</sup> nothing is more efficacious than reading and meditating Holy Scripture, and the examples of saints and converts. The very text of the Bible has within itself a power that no human word can attain: it is the very Word of God.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> We refer the reader to the enlightening article of Canon DONDEYNE in *L'intellectuel chrétien*, pp. 30-33.

<sup>25</sup> Mk., X, 17-27.

<sup>26</sup> Y. DE MONTCHEUIL, *Leçons sur le Christ*, Paris, 1949, ch. IX: La Rédemption, mystère d'Amour, pp. 122 sqq.

<sup>27</sup> *Le problème de la foi*, p. 17.

<sup>28</sup> *Hebrews*, IV, 12.



Again, it would be desirable that the divine Word descend into a soul that is open.<sup>29</sup> The example of genuine Christians, especially of those contemporaries who are known for their literary or scientific ability, will be precious incentives.<sup>30</sup>

The young man whose Faith is thus vitalized will be proud of being a Christian. A simple unboastful pride, but he will not suffer from that inferiority complex which represses some pupils in the State schools, impressed by the frequently superior human ability of professors who are non-believers.

This pride will also assert itself if the course, at every opportunity, makes clear the originality and the unique character of the riches, even humanly speaking, of the Christian Message. Each dogma, for an attentive mind, places the Christian in conditions of human perfection unknown before Christianity. The dogma of the Trinity, for example, opens entirely new perspectives for the meaning of love.<sup>31</sup> The Incarnation guarantees the value of the human person and gives a special lustre to those earthly values which Christ assumed.<sup>32</sup> The Redemption offers us the key to the agonizing problem of suffering.<sup>33</sup> In short, the Christian Message is such that it transcends all the stammerings of the philosophers.<sup>34</sup>

A comparison with the thinkers of antiquity and the results arrived at by those today who abandon Christianity, would furnish a very edifying confirmation of the original richness of Christianity. Although it is a message of eternity, and undoubtedly for this very reason, it answers magnificently to the aspirations of man.<sup>35</sup>

It is by opening up, during the course, perspectives on the history of the Church and on her present struggles, that we will foster the religious thought of the students in a realistic way. They must feel that they are bound to the whole Church by their responsibility as Christians.

This social meaning of destiny and of the spiritual life meets with real obstacles in the attitudes of young State school students who, for the most part, come from families still influenced by that

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<sup>29</sup> Suggested in the above art. of M. Jean GUITTON.

<sup>30</sup> J. GUITTON, *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> NYGREN, *Eros et Agapé.*

<sup>32</sup> P. CHARLES, S. J., *Créateur des choses visibles.*

<sup>33</sup> Y. DE MONTCHEUIL, *op. cit.*, p. 135 seq.

<sup>34</sup> G. SALET, *Les richesses du dogme chrétien*, Le Puy.

<sup>35</sup> M. BLONDEL, *La philosophie et l'esprit chrétien.*

liberal spirit which considers religion as a "private matter."<sup>36</sup> Even though they find some ideas of progressive social reform in their home environment, they do not readily apply these to the religious field. And for this very reason Catholic Action, "which is concerned with others" finds little favour in their eyes. "Each man for himself and God for all" would be a principle more to their liking.

It is by pointing out to them, as occasion arises, the social aspects of the religious and moral life according to Christian principles that this social religious sense will be gradually awakened in them.

Consequently they must be made to understand that Christianity is the "Catholic" religion, to which all humanity is called; and that salvation is not merely individual, but also cosmic.

The doctrine of the Mystical Body will often come into during the teaching à propos of dogma, moral, or the sacramental and liturgical life.<sup>37</sup> Newman's idea of "every soul which betters itself betters the world" must be familiar to them. But inversely, it is good that they reflect on the responsibility subsequent on our refusal in this matter.<sup>38</sup> The history of the Church will be here again a source of enlightening reflections.

Thus a faithful review of the greatness and weakness of the Church and of Christians will awaken the students not only to a sense of collective responsibility, but to the love of "Holy Mother the Church." This is all the more important in the spirit of the course since the atmosphere of neutrality tends to exclude the Christian influence from the temporal domain. Let us often lead our pupils to see the clear-sightedness and firmness of papal teaching in a world of confused ideas, "inter mundanas varietates." Not only do religious values profit by the papal teachings, but human values themselves. Compared with the ideas of thinkers who do not know Catholic thought, the social doctrine of the contemporary Church appears ever more and more as the only true light for a world seeking its own salvation.<sup>39</sup>

Let us note, however, that live, topical, sound presentations are insufficient unless given a practical turn. In modern pedagogy visits are encouraged which help the pupil to have visual expe-

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<sup>36</sup> Thèmes d'études du milieu des Écoles officielles, dans la documentation des S. C. M., rue Sainte-Barbe, 18, Louvain.

<sup>37</sup> É. MERSCH, S. J., *La théologie du Corps mystique. — Morale et Corps mystique.*  
— PHILIPPON, *Le rôle social des sacrements.* — H. DE LUBAC, *Catholicisme.*

<sup>38</sup> H. GUILLEMIN, *Par notre faute.*

<sup>39</sup> R. BOIGELOT, *L'Église et le Monde moderne.*

rience of what is taught in the class room. The religion course should have something similar. Much good would result, for example, from the visit to an abbey or to a religious exhibition under the guidance of the teacher of religion. If it cannot be organized during class time, he can awaken the desire and then profit by holidays to put it into practice.

Presented thus in the light of an active continued Redemption, every phase of the religion course will prepare for Catholic Action. And necessarily so, for the few classes in the top form will not arouse in the students a love of Catholic Action, if they have not already ambioned it and seen it as something real.

The task may seem difficult. The religion course is indeed the most exacting, because it demands that the teacher give himself entirely to his task. If his course is to communicate life, must not he himself be an example of this life ? <sup>40</sup> So, too, he will not be able to prepare others for Catholic Action if he does not believe in it himself, and that, not only in the lofty realm of principles, but in the reality of his apostolic life. We have said above that we must love our pupils. But this requires that we know them. This intimate acquaintance will result in a deeper appreciation of the students' reactions and their spiritual needs.

If it is to be persuasive, the religion course must also reveal the teacher's soul and manifest an enthusiastic conviction that is arrived at only through prayer. An apostolic task of the first order, the religion course will find in prayer its first source of real success : "ministerio verbi et oratione." It is prayer which removes the obstacles — the humble prayer of the teacher and of those whose prayers he requests for his pupils ; the prayer of the students themselves. The prayer said before and after class, and offered for an apostolic intention which concerns the students themselves, would seem to be itself an excellent preparation for Catholic Action.

### III

But even though it prepares hearts and minds, the religion course will be incomplete if the students do not find the means of realizing Catholic Action. In the mentality of the State school student there are often certain objections to Catholic Action ; we have already mentioned them. The religion course may weaken these prejudices,

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<sup>40</sup> " My dear children, with whom I am in labour again, until Christ is formed in you ! " *Gal.*, IV, 19.

but they will not be entirely overcome until the student has an opportunity to participate actively in Catholic Action.

He will find these opportunities in his parish, his only point of contact with Catholic life. Therefore, the teacher of religion will do well to inquire whether or not his pupils engage in parochial activity.

The apostolate in the parish, however, is insufficient for our student. We have already recalled the words of Pius XI. Christian students ought to spread their Faith in the milieu in which they live, among their companions. For this task the course itself will not suffice ; a special formation is required for those who are willing to bring this collective testimony, so that they may be prepared for actual situations. This special formation is the objective of Catholic Action circles.

The teacher himself is often the chaplain of these circles, but circumstances may indicate that he would do better to yield this function to another priest. However, the office of chaplain of these circles is fundamentally that of the teacher. Therefore, he should not merely look upon them with sympathy, but keep them alive, calling upon the assistance of another chaplain if he cannot direct them himself.

In the formation of these circles it is necessary to overcome the students' relative lack of enthusiasm for all that supposes an organization. They will realize, and their personal experience will convince them, that if they do not support one another, their influence upon their *milieu* will be almost imperceptible. Moreover, this will be a concrete opportunity to point out to them the advantages of a movement which is founded upon group activity and directives and whose apostolic action is fostered by « services ».

We have presented here not "the ideal religion course" but that which we know is being followed by several colleagues whose apostolic endeavors we have been following with great interest. The task is difficult, but it is sublime : *ars artium regimen animarum*.

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# The Study of Christian Culture as a Means of Education

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## I

No one can look at the history of Western Civilisation during the present century without feeling dismayed at the spectacle of what modern man has done with his immense resources of new knowledge and new wealth and new power. And if we go back to the nineteenth century and read the words of the scientists and the social reformers and the liberal idealists and realise the mood of unbounded hope and enthusiasm in which this movement of world change was launched, the contrast is even more painful. For not only have we failed to realise the ideals of the nineteenth century, we are all more or less conscious of worse dangers to come — greater and more destructive wars, more ruthless forms of despotism, more drastic suppression of human rights — it is no good going on with the dismal catalogue — we know it all only too well. There is no need to read Aldous Huxley : it is enough to read the debates of the U.N.O. or even to listen to the News Bulletins to convince ourselves that the cause of civilisation is no longer secure and that the great movement of Western man to transform the world has somehow gone astray.

How does modern education stand in face of this contemporary crisis ? Obviously it has a serious responsibility, for it is the function of education to form the guiding mind that should control the destinies of a culture : and it is the absence or the breakdown of this guiding intelligence which is the fundamental cause of our present predicament.

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<sup>1</sup> Since the appearance of the article : *Education and the Crisis of Christian Culture*, so much appreciated by our readers (*Lumen Vitae*, I, 1946, n° 2), Mr. Christopher Dawson has published through Sheed and Ward two volumes of conferences : *Religion and Culture* (1946), and *The Rise of Western Culture* (1950). — Address : Copse Side, Boars Hill, Oxford, England (Editor's Note).

But this is certainly not due to the neglect of education in modern society. No civilisation in history has ever devoted so much time and money and organisation to education as our own. And it is one of the most tragic features of the situation that our failure has been the failure of the first society to be universally educated, one which had been subjected to a more systematic and completely national education than any society of the past.

In spite of this, there is no doubt that the modern European and American system of universal education did suffer from serious defects.

In the *first place*, the achievement of universality was purchased by the substitution of quantitative for qualitative standards. Education was accepted as a good in itself and the main question was how to increase the total output: how to teach more and more people more and more subjects for longer and longer periods. But in proportion as education became universal, it became cheapened. Instead of being regarded as a privilege of the few it became a compulsory routine for everybody. It is difficult for us to imagine the state of mind of a man like Francis Place labouring to all hours of the night, after a hard day's work, out of sheer passion for knowledge.

In the *second place*, the establishment of a universal system of public education inevitably changed the relations of education to the State.

I believe that it is this above all else which has caused the mind of our society to lose its independence so that there is no power left outside politics to guide modern civilisation, when the politicians go astray. For in proportion as education becomes controlled by the State, it will become nationalised or in extreme cases the servant of a political party. This last alternative still strikes us here in England as outrageous, but it is not only essential to the totalitarian state, it existed before the rise of totalitarianism and to a great extent created it, and it is present as a tendency in all modern societies, however opposed they are to totalitarianism in its overt form.

For the immense extension of the scale of education and its ramification into a hundred specialisms and technical disciplines has left the State as the only unifying element in the whole system. In the past the traditional system of classical education provided a common intellectual background and a common scale of values which transcended national and political frontiers and formed the European or Western republic of letters of which every scholar was a citizen.

All the old systems of primary and secondary education presupposed the existence of this intellectual community which they served and from which they received guidance and inspiration. The primary school taught children their letters, the grammar school taught them Latin and Greek, so that educated men everywhere possessed a common language and the knowledge of a common literature or two common literatures.

Now from the modern point of view this traditional education was shockingly narrow, and pedantic. It was also useless, since it had no direct bearing on the life of the modern world, on the world's work and on the techniques of modern civilisation. Therefore the nineteenth-century reformers insisted first that education should be widened to include the whole realm of modern knowledge, and secondly that it should be made practically useful in order to produce skilled technicians and trained specialists or research workers.

These two great reforms have been generally applied, not without success, all over the world during the last fifty or a hundred years. But what has been the result ? The domain of universal knowledge is too vast for any mind to embrace, and the specialisation of the technician and the research worker has become so minute that it leaves no common intellectual bond between the different branches of knowledge.

A Russian expert in applied research on plant biology, a French specialist in the history of the romance lyric, an English worker on atomic research, an American expert in social psychology — all these do not belong to any sort of spiritual community like the humanist republic of letters. They are just individuals with special jobs, and there is a much stronger bond between *all* the Russians and all the Frenchmen and so on, than between scientists as such or technicians as such. No doubt the discipline of scientific research does produce a common type of intelligence and even a common type of character, but so did the older professional disciplines, so that there is a considerable similarity between staff officers or drill sergeants in the armies of the different great powers. But a similarity of this kind on the level of technique does not necessarily make for a similarity on the level of culture. And the same holds good for the scientific specialist. Indeed under present conditions the two types are rapidly becoming assimilated, so that the scientific expert and the military expert are alike instruments of the unified power organisation of the modern state.

Up to a point this is inevitable, granted the complex nature of the modern scientific and technological order. But if it is allowed to develop uncriticised and unchecked, it is fatal to the old ideals of Western Culture as a free spiritual community. It leads to the totalitarian state and perhaps even beyond that to the completely mechanised mass society, to the Brave New Worlds and the nightmares of scientific utopianism in reverse.

How is it possible to preserve the guiding mind of civilisation and to salvage the spiritual traditions of Western Culture ?

The philosopher, the religious leader, the statesman and the

educationist all share this responsibility — all have a part to play. But the responsibility of the educationist is perhaps the most immediate and the heaviest of all, because it is in the sphere of education that the immediate decisions must be taken which will determine the outlook of the next generation.

In the past, as we have seen, education attempted to perform this higher function by means of the traditional classical discipline of humane letters — in other words of Latin and Greek. But we must be careful to distinguish between this particular form of higher education and higher education in general ; or to reduce the central inescapable problem to the old controversy between conservative classicism and radical modernism. It is quite possible that the traditional form of classical education has become completely antiquated and can no longer provide the universal unifying element which our civilisation requires.

But the fact that classical education no longer fulfils that purpose does not mean that civilisation can dispense with this unifying element altogether or that it can be found on a purely technological level.

On the contrary we need it more than ever before — and the more widely we extend the range of education the more necessary it is to provide some principle of cohesion to counterbalance the centrifugal tendencies of specialisation and utilitarianism.

## II

Every form of education that mankind has known from the savage tribe to the highest forms of culture has always involved two elements — the element of technique and the element of tradition, and hitherto it has always been the second that has been the most important. In the first place education teaches children how to *do things* — how to read and write and even at a much more primitive level how to hunt and cook, and plant and build. But besides all these things, education has always meant the initiation of the young into the social and spiritual inheritance of the community : in other words education has meant the transmission of culture.

Now the old classical education was a rather specialised and stylised type of this procedure. It took the tradition of humanism as embodying the highest common factor of Western Culture and trained the young to appreciate it by an intensive course of philological discipline. At first sight it seems highly absurd to take an English farmer's son or the son of a German shopkeeper and thrust



him into writing imitation Ciceronian prose or copies of Latin verses. Yet for all that it did set the stamp of a common classical tradition on a dozen vernacular European literatures and gave the educated classes of every European country a common sense of the standard classical values.

But it was only able to succeed in this specialised intellectual task because it was an intellectual superstructure that was built on a common spiritual tradition. Classical education was only half the old system of European education — below it and above it there was the religious education that was common to the whole people and the higher theological education that was peculiar to the clergy who provided the majority of the teachers in both the other departments of education.

Now the lowest level of this structure, which has been least studied and least regarded, was the most important of them all. It is true that it differed considerably in different parts of Europe, but for religious rather than material reasons. In Protestant Europe it was founded on the Bible and the Catechism, whereas in Catholic Europe, it was based on the liturgy and on religious art and drama and mime which made the church the school of the people. But in either case it provided a system of common beliefs and moral standards, as well as the archetypal patterns of world history and sacred story which formed the background of their spiritual world.

Thus considered as a means for the transmission of culture, classical education, important as it was, formed only one part of the whole system of social education by which the inheritance of culture was transmitted, so that even if it were possible to preserve or to restore classical education it would by itself prove quite ineffective as a solution for our present problem. What we have to do is not merely to find a substitute for the classical humanistic element in the old system, it is the system as a whole from top to bottom which has disappeared, and if the spiritual continuity of Western Culture is to be preserved we must face the problem as a whole and remember the importance of the common spiritual foundation on which the superstructure of higher classical education was built.

It is the failure to recognise this fact which has been largely responsible for the separation of higher education from its spiritual roots in the life of the people, so that our idea of culture has become a sublimated abstraction, instead of the expression of a living tradition which animates the whole society and unites the present and the past.

### III

Is it possible to find a new way in education which will avoid this mistake, which will make the ordinary man aware of the spiritual unity out of which all the separate activities of our civilisation have arisen ?

In order to do this, it is necessary in the first place to look at Western civilisation as a whole and to treat it with the same objective appreciation and respect which the humanists of the past devoted to the civilisation of antiquity.

This does not seem much to ask ; yet there have always been a number of reasons which stood in the way of its fulfilment.

1) In the *first place* there has been the influence of modern nationalism which has led every European people to insist on what distinguished it from the rest, instead of what united it with them. It is not necessary to seek for examples in the extremism of German racial nationalists and their crazy theories, proving that everything good in the world comes from men of Germanic blood. Leaving all these extravagances out of account, we still have the basic fact that modern education in general teaches men the history of their own country and the literature of their own tongue, as though these were complete wholes and not part of a greater unity.

2) In the *second place* there has been the separation between religion and culture, which arose partly from the bitterness of the internal divisions of Christendom and partly from a fear lest the transcendent divine values of Christianity should be endangered by any identification or association of them with the relative human values of culture. Both these factors have been at work, long before our civilisation was actually secularised. They had their origins in the Reformation period (and it was Martin Luther in particular who stated the theological dualism of faith and works in such a drastic form as to leave no room for any positive conception of a Christian culture, such as had hitherto been taken for granted).

3) And in the *third place* the vast expansion of Western civilisation in modern times led to a loss of any standard of comparison or any recognition of its limits in time and space. Western civilisation ceased to be one civilisation amongst others : it became civilisation in the absolute sense.

It is the disappearance or decline of this naïve absolutism and the reappearance of a sense of the relative and limited character of Western civilisation as a particular historic culture, which are the characteristic features of the present epoch. And at the same time we have begun to doubt the validity of the nationalistic approach to history and culture, and to realise the evils and folly of the

blind sectarian feuds that have broken up the social unity of Christendom during recent centuries.

Thus it would seem that all the main obstacles to the understanding of Western civilisation as a historic reality have disappeared and the time should be ripe for a new positive approach to the whole problem.

But there remains one serious obstacle — or rather there has arisen a new obstacle which was not present in the past. The events of the last forty years have inflicted such a blow to the self-confidence of Western civilisation and to the belief in Progress which was so strong during the nineteenth century, that men tend to go too far in the opposite direction: in fact the modern world is experiencing the same kind of danger which was so fatal to the ancient world — the crisis which Gilbert Murray writes of in his *Four Stages of Greek Religion* as “The Loss of Nerve.”

There have been plenty of signs of this in Western literature for a long time past, and it may have a very serious effect on Western culture and education, if it goes too far. This is the typical tragedy of the intelligentsia as shown in nineteenth-century Russia and often in twentieth-century Germany: the case of a society or a class devoting enormous efforts to higher education and to the formation of an intellectual élite and then finding that the final result of the system is to breed a spirit of pessimism and nihilism and revolt. There was something seriously wrong about an educational system which cancelled itself out in this way, which picked out the ablest minds in a society and subjected them to an intensive process of competitive development which ended in a revolutionary or cynical reaction against the society that produced it. But behind these, the defects of an overcerebralised and overcompetitive method of education, there is the deeper cause in the loss of the common spiritual background which unifies education and social life. For the liberal faith in progress which inspired the nineteenth century was itself a substitute for the simpler and more positive religious faith which was the vital bond of the Western community. If we wish to understand our past and the inheritance of Western Culture, we have to go behind the nineteenth-century development and study the old spiritual community of Western Christendom as an objective historical reality.

I believe that the study and understanding of this cultural tradition ought to be given the same place in modern education as the study of the Graeco-Roman tradition received in the classical humanist education of the past. For the culture of Christendom

is not only of vital importance to us genetically as the source of our own culture, it also has a greater intrinsic value than even the classical culture possessed. At first sight this may be questioned by the humanist, but I think that reflection will show that it is true even from the humanist point of view, for humanism itself as we know it is not the humanism of the Greeks and Romans, but a humanism which has been transmuted, if not created, by the Christian culture of the West. It is not merely that Erasmus and Vives and Grotius deserve our attention just as much as Quintilian and Cicero. It is that behind these men there is a living tradition, reaching back through Petrarch and John of Salisbury to Alcuin and Bede and Boethius and it was this that built the spiritual bridge across the ages by which classical culture passed into the life of Western man.

The existence of this spiritual community or psychological continuum is the ultimate basic reality which underlies all the separate activities of modern Western societies and which alone makes Western education possible.

#### IV

The obvious difficulty that has prevented the study of European culture becoming a part of the regular curriculum of studies is its vastness and its complexity. The great advantage of classical education was the fact that it involved the study of only two languages and two literatures and histories. But European culture has produced about twenty vernacular literatures and its history is spread out among an even larger number of political communities. At first sight it is an unmanageable proposition and we can understand how educationalists have so often come to acquiesce in a cultural nationalism which at least saved them from being overwhelmed by a multiplicity of strange tongues and unknown literatures. But the true method, it seems to me, is rather to find the constitutive factors of the European community and to make them the basis of our study.

This means reversing the traditional nationalist approach which concentrated the student's attention on the distinctive characteristics of the national cultures and disregarding or passing lightly over the features that they shared in common. It means also that we should have to devote much more attention to the religious development, since it was in religion that Europe found its original basis of unity.



In the past there has been a tendency to treat political history and ecclesiastical history as self contained subjects and to leave the history of religion to the ecclesiastical historians. But no serious historian can be satisfied with this state of affairs, since it destroyed the intelligible unity of culture and left the history of culture itself suspended uneasily between political and ecclesiastical history with no firm basis in either of them. It is essential to realize that the Christian community in the past was not a pious ideal, but a juridical fact which underlay the social organization of Western culture.

For more than a thousand years the religious sacrament of baptism which initiated a man into the Christian community was also a condition of citizenship in the political community. The obligations of Canon Law or Church Law were binding in a greater or less degree in common law, so that even in a Protestant land, like England, the fundamental questions of personal status and property — everything connected with the marriage contract and the right of bequest — fell within the purview of the Courts Christian.

The old English saying or legal maxim that Christianity is the law of the land faithfully reflects the situation which existed in Europe for a thousand years and more from the time when the barbarian kingdoms first accepted Christianity. For this reception of Christianity was a solemn public act which involved the acceptance of an ew way of life and a corporate adhesion to a new international community.

Now it seems to me that the comprehension of the nature of this sociological and psychological change is of much greater educational importance than most of the history that I was taught in my own school and university days. These were matters that we were supposed to learn from other sources. Whether we did so or not depended mainly on personal experience and family tradition.

Even to-day I doubt if much thought is given to the profound revolution in the psychological basis of culture by which the new society of Western Christendom came into existence. Stated in the terms of Freudian psychology what occurred was the translation of religion from the sphere of the Id to that of the Super ego. The pagan religion of the Northern barbarians was a real force in society, but it was not an intellectual force nor hardly a moral one in our sense of the word. It was an instinctive cult of natural forces which were blind and amoral, save in so far as war itself creates a certain rudimentary heroic ethos.

Now with the reception of Christianity the old gods and their

rites were rejected as manifestations of the power of evil. Religion was no longer an instinctive homage to the dark underworld of the Id. It became a conscious and continual effort to conform human behaviour to the requirements of an objective moral law and an act of faith in a new life and in sublimated patterns of spiritual perfection.

The sense of guilt was transferred from the corporate responsibility of the blood feud to the sphere of the individual conscience and became the sense of sin and produced its correlative the act of repentance.

Now this spirit of moral effort and this consciousness of personal responsibility have remained characteristic of Western Christian culture—it may even be argued that they are its essential characteristics and that even its external political and material achievements have been to a considerable extent conditioned by them.

Of course it may be said that all civilizations are Super ego structures and that it is precisely this which distinguishes civilization from barbarism. But at the same time there are important differences in the part which religion plays in this process.

In some cases as in Hinduism the sharp breach with the forces of the Id which was characteristic of the conversion of the West has never taken place and life is not conceived as a process of moral effort and discipline but as an expression of cosmic libido, as in the Dance of Siva.

On the other hand in Buddhism we see a very highly developed Super ego, but here the Super ego is allied with the death-impulse so that the moralization of life is at the same time a regressive process that culminates in Nirvana.

No doubt similar tendencies were present in the Western world and find expression in the intermittent outbreaks of Manicheism and other forms of religious and metaphysical dualism.

But the characteristic feature of Western civilization has always been a spirit of moral activism by which the individual Super ego has become a dynamic social force. In other words the Christian tradition has made the conscience of the individual person an independent power which tends to weaken the omnipotence of social custom and to open the social process to new individual initiatives.

At the present time historians and sociologists are no doubt inclined to minimize the effect of moral and religious idealism or conscious moral effort on the course of social development and to concentrate their attention on material motives, conflicts of material interests and the influence of economic forces. But whatever our ultimate religious and philosophical views may be, it is

unjustifiable to rule out one series of historical factors, because we do not agree with the beliefs and ideals that are associated with them.

Take the case of modern Western colonial expansion. The historian and the sociologist have the right to dismiss the explanations of nineteenth century imperialists with regard to the civilizing mission of the Anglo Saxon race and so forth as an idealistic excuse to disguise the real facts of imperialist exploitation. Equally they have the right to regard the prospector or the trader as more genuine representatives of the colonial movement than the missionary or the educationalist. But they have not the right to deny the existence of the Western missionary movement as a real factor in colonial expansion, nor even to identify the two elements and to regard the missionary as an agent of capitalism with his collar turned back to front.

And the same principle must be applied to the history of Western Christendom in general. The historian may well argue that the feudal baron is more typical of medieval culture than the monk or the friar; he may equally point out how the Church became a stronghold of feudal privilege. But he cannot deny that Christianity was one of the formative powers in medieval culture or that throughout the whole course of Western history there was a spiritual élite which was sincerely devoted to putting their ideals into practice and making the Christian way of life a reality, while at the same time the whole society was generally united in the acceptance of Christian beliefs and in at least a theoretical acceptance of Christian moral standards.

Now when these conditions have obtained over a continuous period of more than a thousand years, it is difficult to deny that they must have had a great cumulative effect on the life of Western man and the forms of Western thought and feeling. I would myself go farther and maintain that Western culture as a whole is the fruit of this thousand years of continuous spiritual effort, and that there is no aspect of European life which has not been profoundly affected by it.

## V

If this is true, as I believe it to be, it seems to follow that the history that we ought to study — the history that really matters — is the history of this dynamic spiritual process, rather than that of the conflicts and rivalries of the various European states. But is it possible to do so? The main obstacle is certainly not lack

of material — it is rather the wealth of material which is still lying unused and sometimes unknown. It is not so long ago that Henri Brémond wrote his literary history of religious sentiment in France in the seventeenth century which even in its ten volumes is still but a fragment of the work that he had planned. But even so he disclosed a whole new field of study of which even specialists were largely unaware. And this is only one example of the rich mines of unused material for European cultural history which lie, as it were, at our very doors.

No! The real difficulty that stands in the way of these studies is an ideological, a spiritual one, which affects the very heart of the problem. If European culture is the external expression of a dynamic spiritual process, how do we ourselves stand towards it? Are we part of that process or is it a different process altogether? And is it possible to study the spiritual process of Western culture without taking sides one way or the other?

Now in the first place I think that the acceptance of the Christian faith is not an essential condition for the study of Christian culture. It is perfectly possible in theory to appreciate and to study Western culture as a spiritual whole without being a Christian. That was after all the position of many of the great liberal humanitarian historians and sociologists of the nineteenth century. But these men never regarded themselves as outside the European tradition even in its spiritual aspect. They were very conscious of the moral dynamism of Christian culture and they accepted its ethos whole heartedly. In fact they regarded themselves as having gone one better than their Christian predecessors by the attainment of a higher, purer and more sublimated ethical ideal. In short they regarded themselves as super Christians. If you think I am exaggerating read Matthew Arnold — read *Literature and Dogma* or the preface to his *Irish Essays*. All this, however, has become a part of ancient history — an episode in an appendix to the process we want to study. The difficulty to-day is of a different nature.

We have to face the emergence of a real and fundamental criticism of Christian culture which rejects its moral ideals and its psychological structure no less than its metaphysical theory and its theological beliefs. It involves the reversal of the spiritual revolution which gave birth to Western culture and a return to the psychological situation of the old pagan world, whether it takes the form of a conscious neo-pagan movement as with the Nazis, or some form of materialism which is equally opposed to the Christian world view. This involves a revolt against the moral



process of Western culture and the dethronement of the individual conscience from its dominant position at the heart of the cultural process. Consequently it means the sense of guilt loses its personal character and is reabsorbed in the consciousness of the community — reappearing not indeed in the old form of the blood feud, but in the parallel phenomena of racial hatred and class war, whereby the sense of guilt is extraverted and transferred to a guilty race or a guilty class which thus become psychological scape-goats.

Now wherever this revolution has taken place there is no longer any room for the understanding of Christian culture. It simply becomes a question of *explaining away* so that to the Nazi the achievements of Christian culture are explained in detail as examples of the Nordic genius asserting itself in spite of the obstruction of Mediterranean Christian and Semitic influences, while for the Marxian the history of Christendom must be re-written in terms of the materialist interpretation of history, thus entirely altering the sense and direction of the movement of history.

The results of the new historiography may be seen in Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century* or in the *Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* which is perhaps even more significant owing to its official and anonymous character (it was produced by a commission of the Central Committee of the CPSU).

## VI

This psychological breach with the old European Christian tradition is a much more serious thing than any political or economic revolution, for it means not only the dethronement of the Western conscience but also the abdication of the rational consciousness which is inseparably bound up with it. It is indeed doubtful if Western society can survive the change, for it is not a return to the past or to the roots of our social life. It is too radical for that. Instead of going downstairs step by step, neopaganism jumps out of the top storey window, and whether one jumps out of the right hand window or the left makes very little difference by the time one reaches the pavement.

The alternative to this suicidal technique is to accept the existence of Christian culture as an objective historical fact, and try to understand it by its own ideas and to judge it by its own standards, as classical scholars have done in the past with regard to the culture of the ancient world. For it is both unscholarly and unphilosophical

to look at Byzantine culture through the eyes of the eighteenth century rationalist or medieval culture through the eyes of a nineteenth century Protestant or Christian culture in general through the eyes of a materialist.

Instead of these ways of looking at the past from outside as something alien, let us try to study Western Christian culture from the Christian point of view — to see it as a new way of life which was brought into Europe nearly nineteen hundred years ago when St. Paul set sail from Troy to Macedonia and gradually expanded until it became accepted as the universal standard of the European way of life.

This does not mean that we ought to ignore or slur over the gap between Christian ideals and social realities. On the contrary the existence of this dualism created that state of vital tension which is the condition of European culture. In every age and every Western society this tension expresses itself in different forms from the simple straightforward dualism of Christian culture and pagan barbarism which we see in Bede's Ecclesiastical History to the intense inner conflict "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit" which we see in a Pascal or a Kierkegaard. Where this tension is absent, — where civilization has become "autarcic" — self-sufficient and self satisfied, there the process of Christian culture has been extinguished or terminated. But even to-day we can hardly say that this has happened. Indeed what we have seen during the last century has been something very different — an increase in spiritual tension which has become almost world-wide, although it has lost the positive element of religious faith which was an essential condition of its creative power in Europe in the past.

It is obvious that there is a profound difference between the old dualism of the Christian way of life and unregenerate human nature on the one hand, and the new dualism of the revolutionary ideologies of liberalism, nationalism and socialism and the traditional order of society on the other, but there is a certain relation between the two, so that it is possible to maintain that the whole revolutionary tradition is a post-Christian phenomenon which transposes a pre-existent psychological pattern to a different sociological tradition. But even if that were the case, it would make it all the more important to understand how the archetypal pattern had originated.

I think we know too little about the modern revolutionary social situation to understand it as a whole. But this is not the

case with the ages of Christian culture that preceded it. Here the documentary evidence is more extensive than for any comparable period of world history. We know not only the course of its development from the beginning, we know the lives and thoughts of the men who played the leading part in that development from the beginning. We can study the development on every social and intellectual level from the highest to the lowest and in relation to all kinds of environments and social traditions.

The educational value of a study of this kind is enormous because it enables us to coordinate a great number of specialist studies which are more and more losing their educational value for lack of any such unifying principle. As I said before, I believe the neglect of this study has been the root cause of the failure of modern education as a unifying force in the modern world. We have become so accustomed to studying the parts without any reference to the whole that we are in danger of forgetting that there is any such thing as a cultural whole : a thing which the old classical humanist educators never entirely lost sight of, even when they seemed most pedantic. But this neglect of the study of our culture has been accidental rather than intentional — it resulted from a complication of different factors some of which I have already discussed.

The time has come to repair this mistake. If we deliberately perpetuate it, now that we know what is at stake : if we consciously permit the guidance of the modern world to pass from the leaders of culture to the partisans and the political ideologists, then we shall have a heavier responsibility than the politicians for the breakdown of Western civilization.

I realize that there are very great practical difficulties in the way of a study which involves living religious issues as well as historical ones : difficulties as between Christians and non-Christians and still more between the adherents of the different forms of Christianity. But these difficulties are essentially practical, since none of the parties concerned — not even the non-Christians — are opposed in principle to the study of the Christian culture of the past as an objective historical phenomenon : indeed our own past is so deeply rooted in that culture that any refusal to study it means a refusal of history itself. Moreover the field of work is so wide that there is ample room for all our schools of thought and all our social and religious traditions to follow their own lines of study without jostling one another.

In history as in other branches of knowledge there must inevitably be controversy and difference of opinion on a thousand particular

points. But the justification of such conflicts is that they elucidate and do not obscure or obstruct. The essential task is to understand Christian culture as a whole, which arose from the impact of Christianity on classical culture and Western barbarism, creating from these dissimilar elements a new spiritual world which forms the background of modern history.

For if we try to ignore or explain away this creative process in order to enhance the importance of our own national achievement or of some contemporary political ideology, we deprive ourselves of our own cultural inheritance and narrow the intelligibility of history.

Such mistakes are possible — they have taken place in the past, and in so far as they have occurred they mark the great set-backs in the history of civilization. It is one of the greatest tasks of education to prevent this happening and to keep alive the common tradition of culture through the dark ages or the periods of sudden catastrophe when mass opinion is under the influence of passion and fear and when the individual has become the slave of economic necessity.

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# The Christian Teaching of Literature and History

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## I. THE LITERATURE COURSE FROM A CHRISTIAN ANGLE

To take instruction in literature from the Christian standpoint does not mean giving up the study of profane classical writers. Nor does it mean distorting the "humanist" message of those writers, in order to force them into conformity with religious ideas.

On the contrary, true values as found in the classics are enriched by comparison with Christian ones. A literature course given from the Christian point of view is *more complete* and *more human* than a purely secular one. Some examples will serve to prove this.

The heroes of antiquity were embodiments of the virtues of resignation, silent courage, despairing heroism in face of an implacable fate. They are set before us as ideal types. Weakness is unknown to them. They are ignorant of sin, their crimes never being anything but the consequence of a blindness sent from the gods or of error (Até). They stand alone. They are saved or lost by their own actions. Endowed with physical beauty, this beauty connotes moral goodness, the rectitude of *kalokagathia*. Hector, Achilles, Ulysses are well known examples.

These human virtues are good in themselves. A certain grandeur, a forceful quality of temperament and character, are positive ac-

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<sup>1</sup> Readers are acquainted with the two previous articles in *Lumen Vitae* by Rev. Charles MOELLER, that attracted some attention: *Mankind To-morrow and Christianity* (I, 1946, n° 2); *Influence of College on Religious Life* (III, 1948, n° 2). — Address: rue Léon-Théodor, 167, Jette-Brussels, BELGIUM (Editor's note).

quisitions, needful also for the Christian. But such a type reveals only one aspect of humanity. For instance, the heroes of the Old Testament are of a different type. David, Moses, have their faults and weaknesses. But yet they are "chosen" by God as witnesses to the Eternal in the midst of the community of the "People of God." Their dominant quality is no longer self-possession, forcefulness, courage, drawn from the wellspring of a human ideal, æsthetic above all, but it is humility, simplicity, the gift of drawing down grace of God, of hearing His Voice. In the same way, both Old and New Testament bring the "good news" to the humble, the little ones, as the *Beatitudes* tell us. This exaltation of the poor to the highest place in the kingdom of God represents a complete reversal of the humanism of antiquity.

It is obvious that, without in any way despising the virtues of greco-latin humanism, its achievements and its failures show up best on comparison with the humanism of the *Beatitudes*. Innumerable passages of literature inspired by this latter humanism may serve us as illustrations, notably those of Peguy, Dostoiewski, Shakespeare.

Another example will better explain our point. Corneille's heroes are the incarnation of an admirable youth. In them, as Peguy said, "the spring of nature and the spring of grace are to be found." But Corneille's conception of the will, inspired by Descartes' theory of the passions, only shows one side of it, that which is confounded with self possession, autonomy. Hence comes the impression which Corneille so often conveys of rigidity, tenseness to an exaggerated degree. His protagonists seem to try and "break records" in heroism; his conception of love involves the idea that the beloved one must necessarily be worthy of admiration. Our minds turn to that very complicated series of heroics which alternately propel Chimène and Rodrigue, in *Le Cid*.

The character of Violaine, in *L'Annonce faite à Marie*, is just as human as one of Corneille's heroes. But it represents a quite different conception of will and heroism: will which no longer connotes hardness, selfmastery, but pliability, kindness; liberty no longer means primarily autonomy, but liberation, confident response to a Divine call. And if it is true that there is in Christian grace something of that "springtime, of temporal/eternal dawn" of which Péguy speaks à propos of *Polyeucte*, it is still more true that there is a call, a gift, in it from the God who "seeks man before man seeks Him."

It is the whole conception of *personality* which is in question

here : too often personality is confused with self-mastery, useful but profane, in a word, a stoic control. Personality means something quite other and is without doubt above all a capability of being open to the call which comes to us from others, and above all, from that great Other Who is God. The stoic personality, and that of classic humanism is shut to any live contact with others ; the Christian personality is open, is formed by communion, the communion of mind with minds. In this connection, the writings of Gabriel Marcel are very valuable.

To take another example. The theme of sad, smiling resignation in face of death and old age, with the invitation to "gather ye rosebuds while ye may" is one of the most common, most ancient and universal in poetry. Horace and Ronsard are two illustrious examples. And it is beyond doubt that they express authentic human sentiments.

But the sentiments are those of the profane. The Christian takes a different view of death. While for the ancients (and for those moderns whose humanism is inspired by antiquity), youth is the beautiful time of life and old age its hideous winter, in the Biblical perspective, youth is the time of illusions, old age, if it be lightened by hope in God, is the period of wisdom. And this wisdom is both human (the art of good and kind behaviour) and religious (the keeping of a law which is a call from God, a call to become more and more like Him). The classic wisdom of the perfect gentleman who seeks to adorn with polish and refinement an existence as limited in its duration as in its human possibilities, is a poor thing in the light of the great challenge to the folly of the Cross, to sanctity. Péguy tells us of the woodcutter who thinks of the time when he will no longer be there, when his children will have taken his place and will have forgotten him, but draws hope from the thought, because "one only works for one's children." "One day one must join the dead of the village and the neighbourhood." It is the Christian idea of growing old. And the doctrine of "timely-eternal," according to which life is constantly resuscitated to resemble that of God Himself, "Eternal youth," because through the Incarnation and the Sacraments, it forms one with the God Who dwelt among us to restore the "suppleness of our first youth ;" this doctrine has been the inspiration of some of our most beautiful literary masterpieces. And these are Christian masterpieces. As to the "great calls" to the folly of the Cross, think of the heroes of Claudel's plays, Violaine, Rodrigue, Christopher Columbus, etc.

A final example will serve to describe the Christian atmosphere

with regard to the literature course. It is taken from foreign authors of our day. What treasures of thought can one not discover by comparing the type of man favoured by Goethe in *Faust*, *Wilhelm Meister*, with the Christian delineated by Dostoiewski, for example ! On the one hand the "faustian" humanism, based on the "possession of the world," on the other the vision through transparency of the "Icon of the Christ suffering and transfigured" by means of the tears and plight of the "humiliated and despised." In the same way, consider the great power of compassion in Shakespeare when he deals with humble folk or sketches for us his silhouettes of idealists foredoomed to temporal reverses (Hamlet, Richard II, Lear). This is fine but it is only one side of the truth about Shakespeare. His compassion has its origin in the compassion of the Christ of the Beatitudes for the lowly ones of this world. And Shakespeare's great conception that there are temporal successes, especially political ones, which are worse than temporal defeats, that there is a strange beauty surrounding the "man of sorrows" who has "espoused poverty," as for instance the dethroned Richard II, is more than a simply human discovery : it is the reflection of the Pascal mystery in which apparent death is real life, and the apparent victory of evil is really its destruction.

These examples are enough to show what I mean by a course in literature from a Christian angle. It is to be regretted that literature textbooks, when they are Christian, are content to be so in a *negative* sense, suppressing or being silent concerning facts or passages which are impious or immoral. We should have manuals of literature which systematically suggest these comparisons of which I have given examples. Christian truths are of the "interior." It is vain to try to top, however cleverly, the edifice of profane culture with a "*supernatural*" roof. There is no solution to the question in that. But that, alas, is just what most of the manuals attempt. On the contrary, without distorting the message of the classical authors, it should be demonstrated that their ideal of selfmastery, of glory, of human success, corresponds to the stage described by Christ when he told Peter, "When thou wert young, thou girdest thyself and went whither thou wouldest." When that has been pointed out, when it has been shown that this apprentice stage of mankind, this fructifying of talents, is a necessary phase in man's growth, the humanism of the Beatitudes will be revealed, contrasted with the inevitable failure of earthly humanism. The



necessity of letting oneself be "girded by Another who will take thee whither thou wouldest not" will be made clear, that Other being Christ, the living God, Who calls men and gives them the grace for that great and only supernatural adventure, sanctity. That is what Christ meant by His words to Peter.

It is obvious that the classic syllabus in French-speaking countries, as at present drawn up, presents various obstacles to this human and Christian teaching which is from God. Those of England and Italy, with their Shakespeare and their Dante, offer greater possibilities of realising these sole and authentic "Christian humanities."

The task is urgent. « For the time is short and this world is passing. »

## II. THE CHRISTIAN TEACHING OF HISTORY

It is not an easy thing to teach history in the light of Christianity. In one sense, history is amoral: it does not verify the moral law by the course of events. Apart from the undoubted law that a falling birthrate is a sign of decadence in a nation and that all great empires have crumbled when their birthrate fell below their death-rate, no other moral truth can be seen at first sight to be verified. History introduces us to a jungle whose law is the survival of the fittest and merciless struggle for existence: the constant succession of wars, peace which is but a balance of armed forces, all this makes a picture which, in the words of Grousset, is "a scandal to the mind and tragedy for the heart."

But this conclusion in itself points to an essential lesson for the Christian. That is to say, humanity cannot achieve its destiny here below, that the Cross of Christ is the one hope for man, that the earthly city is weak and only the heavenly Jerusalem will endure, that "Jerusalem" mysteriously being constructed amidst the turmoil of this world. And, moreover, the apparent triumph of the forces of falsehood and cruelty which we are now witnessing, though not for the first time in the history of mankind, is only the obverse of Christian truth. This truth was lived by Christ and is now being relived by the Church in its passion: the apparent failure of Christ and His Church is a clear manifestation of the Pascal mystery of death and life.

It may be said that this is a theory to which everyone will not subscribe. I admit it. I will but add that it is impossible to study history without a general idea of the world and of man as basis to

one's studies. It is only necessary to read the secular handbooks of French history to see what a disproportionate part the Revolution of '89 plays in them : proof positive of a fundamental predilection for the "lights of humanism." I would simply show that to admit the Christian verities as our basic hypothesis, making a careful distinction between them and the political "régimes" which claim to embody them, is to throw a clearer light upon the study of history than if one were, consciously or unconsciously, to eliminate these viewpoints.

1. The Christian view of history is more *universal*. Take the *Middle Ages* : how many secular manuals still write of them as an age of obscurity ? When one is familiar with books like those of G. Cohen, a Sorbonne historian on the *Great Light of the Middle Ages*, or of Gilson, one is astonished at the secular historians contenting themselves with an "honourable mention" of those times. The Christian view of that epoch, without "canonising" it, reveals its greatness and its failures and restores ten centuries of history to their true place. Emile Mâle ends one of his works dealing with the religious art of the XIIIth century with the words : "When will it be understood that in this realm (of religious art) France produced of her best ?"

In the same way, the secular historians give 1789 an altogether unwarranted prominence. The Christian historian applies a much more universal criterion ; he recognises the necessity for the bourgeois and proletariat classes to improve their statuts in a just commonwealth, he defends *some* freedoms, *some* reforms, but remains a sceptic as to *The Liberty, The Revolution*, that is to say, the complete reversal of values and a complete break with pre-revolutionary France. He may be an excellent republican — Leo XIII called for that from all the Catholics at the beginning of his pontificate — without agreeing with rationalist *ideology*.

With regard to *space*, the Christian view of history is also more universal : it goes beyond a narrow chauvinism, without however being unaware that patriotism is to be respected (but not to be confounded with the principle of nationalism) ; it takes into account the rôle of all nations as units in the entire world, and this because the Christian knows that the Church embraces every culture and every political system. Grousset's *Bilan de l'Histoire* is noteworthy from this point of view.

2. The Christian view has *more lights and shades*. Instead of

a hard and fast distinction between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Christian historians have shown that, on the contrary, there were many Renaissance elements in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries (for example, the "glory" theme in the story of Abelard and Heloise), and that very many characteristics of the Middle Ages survived in the full tide of the Renaissance period (e. g., from the iconographical aspect, as Focillon shows). Similarly the Christian will treat the period of the Crusades in a far more elastic manner than the secular historian, who too often sees in them nothing more than purely commercial undertakings, while bogus Christian historians see only the religious aspect. Grousset, in his *Histoire des Croisades*, studies them from both the Western and *Eastern* sides and gives a shaded picture: it includes the aspect of an expedition with its sordid accompaniments, and also the spiritual vision which makes of the Crusades a historical whole, in which, as always, the religious element is mingled with unfortunate compromises with temporal ambitions.

3. The Christian view goes *deeper*. It takes man as he is, whole and entire, by its acknowledgement of the religious factors which have always played such a great part in the development of events. The history of religions shows more and more that religious causes underlie the huge migrations of peoples, the construction of architectural masterpieces and the birth of literature: routes taken by pilgrimages explain the origin of heroic poems as well as the famous and beautiful romanesque churches. From this point of view the history of the Church should have its place in the history syllabus. The secular historian who can see nothing in all this but an accidental phenomenon appropriate to the childhood of man, renders himself blind to whole decades of culture and civilisation. For instance, I remember a book dealing with the town of La Charité on the Loire, which confines itself to the revolution of '89, dismissing the centuries of the town's monastic splendour as a mass of foolish legends and old wives' tales. Not a word to tell how that "barbarous and childish" age was able to produce the splendid church which is still the admiration of the artists of the entire world.

4. The Christian view of history is more *objective*: it arrives quickly at the conclusion that all political systems are good insofar as they satisfy a minimum requirement of justice, respect of man's rights and his liberty. But every system has its faults, and the

Christian historian is, quâ Christian, neither monarchist, republican nor totalitarian. Is it necessary to recall Leo XIII's message to the Catholics of France ? On the contrary, the secular historian, at any rate in France, puts into his antiroyalist attitude an objectively unjustifiable ideology.

In the same way, the study of history in a Christian atmosphere permits important distinctions to be drawn, for instance, with regard to what constitutes the essential element of Christianity in the necessary but temporary compromises with the various régimes. Christian history does not set up the Middle Ages as the realised ideal of a Christian régime : that temporal Christianity had its faults and its good points but we must not try to "return to the Middle Ages."

The same thing applies to the cultures of the Far East : the Christian historian is not obliged either to condemn out of hand the despotic systems or any others, or to uphold them as the only ones of value. Here again, the Christian takes the more objective standpoint.

5. The Christian outlook on history is *more solid*, more satisfying for the mind capable of reflection. The greatnesses and weaknesses of the successive political systems are soon laid bare to the Christian historian. He understands the essentially relative worth of empires and civilisations. He will therefore understand much more clearly that if temporal power plays an essential part in the affairs of men, *that part cannot exhaust the possibilities of man's destiny*. Man is a pilgrim on earth, and in comparison with the empires which succeed one another, the Church is like a spiritual Israel which journeys through the desert of this world towards a world to come, a promised land, which can alone give their full meaning to man's aspirations. The work *Christianity and History* of H. Butterfield, in which the author shows that the prophet Isaiah explains more fully our "age of concentration camps" than either Marx or Spengler, is a striking illustration of my argument. The wellknown and admirable works of Toynbee or Dawson also prove how the Christian view of history enlarges and strengthens the syntheses of historians.

6. A last remark seems to be called for. One of the most discussed topics today is "the meaning of history." The followers of Spengler-Frobenius' complete pessimism, the scientific optimists, and, finally, marxists, who are both optimistic as to the immediate



social future and pessimistic as to the "end of the world," are all embroiled in endless controversies.

A Christian vision of history allows us to integrate the element of truth in each of these three opinions. While recognising in the work of civilisation the accomplishment of the divinely imposed duty of "increasing and multiplying, of filling the earth and ruling it," the Christian historian also knows that the "end of time" will sweep away all the trappings of human culture. But his faith tells him at the same time that, mysteriously, everything that is achieved here in the sphere of the supernatural life, reaches to the real roots of history. What Father Daniélou calls "sacramentary history" ensures the safeguarding and the transfiguration of man's civilising efforts, as far as they are the effect of true spiritual and supernatural forces.

So we discover that the Christian is the best historian. By this, I mean that the mere fact of his being a Christian renders him more apt for studying *humanity, which remains the center of all history*. I do not mean that in actual fact a Christian historian is more discerning. Apart from a few outstanding exceptions, Catholic history books often fail either from a vague neutrality in face of real problems, or from too narrow an apologetic outlook.

Here then is an urgent need for work : it is not enough to put forward, in contemporary history for example, the religious activity of the Church in the missions and in art, *side by side* with an uncritical account of secular history. What is required is that the incidence of the two lines of events upon one another should be pointed out ; and if Christians are found to be too much aloof from the political and social developments of contemporary history, this should be pointed out and the older pupils invited to consider the matter.

Half measures will no longer do. We must go forward and attend to S. Paul's words : "Christ yesterday, today, and for ever."

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# The « Student Christian Movement » and the Religious Education in Secondary Schools of Great-Britain

by the Rt. Rev. Dr. William GREER

*Bishop of Manchester (Church of England)*<sup>1</sup>

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School education in England, as you are no doubt aware, operates in two main channels : (1) the Independent or privately maintained Schools to which class belong the Public Boarding Schools of the country and : (2) the Maintained Schools, to which belong the vast body of publicly Maintained Day Secondary and Technical Schools which are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

In the former, many of which are religious foundations, provision is made for religious instruction and Chaplains are appointed to be responsible for the religious life of the School.

In the latter, though the Education Act of 1944 made religious instruction obligatory in all Schools, there are no Chaplains and in many cases at present few qualified teachers to implement the conditions of the Act.

It is in this latter body of Schools that the Student Christian Movement is seeking to extend its work and influence. The Student Christian Movement in Great Britain — a branch of the World's Student Christian Federation — has worked during the past fifty years in the Colleges and Universities of the country, but six years ago it set up an independent branch of the Movement to work

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<sup>1</sup> Born on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1902, the Rt. Rev. William Derrick Lindsay GREER was educated at St. Columba's College (County Dublin), and Trinity College (Dublin). Primarily appointed Assistant Principal to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Northern Ireland (1925-1929), he later became curate (1929-1932), then vicar of St. Luke's Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne. In 1935 he was appointed General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland. He filled this post until 1944 where he was nominated Principal of Westcott House, Cambridge. His promotion as Bishop (of the Church of England) of Manchester dates from 1947. — Address : Bishop's House, 26, Singleton Road, Manchester 7, ENGLAND (Editor's note).

in the senior forms of the Secondary Schools, and it is now, with the co-operation of Heads of Schools, and with the approval of the Local Education Authorities, active in some one thousand Secondary Schools in the country.

Its main purpose is to integrate the Christian faith and life into the educational life of the whole school. It is doing this in three ways :

(1) *Non-residential Conferences*. These are planned by the Movement with the full co-operation of the Heads of Schools, with the purpose of bringing into the senior forms of the schools religious experts who can relate the Christian faith to the mind of the adolescent. Lectures are given and adequate opportunity provided for group discussion and the answering of questions. About one hundred such conferences for groups of schools are at present arranged annually.

(2) *Study Groups*. As part of the follow-up to such conferences groups are often formed in the senior forms of schools where study, discussion and research are continued, and the Movement is able to advise such groups as to speakers, study material and programmes. Such groups, when approved by Heads of School, are affiliated to the Movement. In some cases where groups are not set up, the staff of the Movement is able, as the result of Conferences, to advise Heads on the question of syllabus which enables religion to play a full part in the teaching curriculum of the whole form instead of just in a group of interested students.

(3) *Residential Conferences*. These latter take the form of

a) week-end conferences. These are arranged in term time at some School or Conference centre and in some cases are actually sponsored by Local Education Authorities.

b) Mid-week Conferences. These are gradually being sponsored by Heads of Schools and are arranged for sixth form and scholarship pupils to take place after School examinations in the summer term.

c) Holiday conferences. These are arranged to take place in the Easter or summer vacation and vary in length from a few days to a fortnight. They are of particular value, not only in bringing boys and girls of different schools, traditions and backgrounds together, (boys and girls from the Public Schools and pupils from schools abroad accept invitations) but in providing a community atmosphere in which the Christian faith is not only discussed but lived.

The activities of the Church of England (since it is but one amongst

other Christian bodies) are not unnaturally rather limited in Secondary School education, but the Student Christian Movement in Schools, because of its interdenominational character, is to a very large extent, overcoming these difficulties, and the work and influence of the Movement is coming to be recognised by Churches, Schools and Local Education Authorities as being a vital and valuable contribution to the whole field of education.

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# The Orthodox Church and the Religious Education of Its Young Members

by Victor YOURIEFF  
*Archpriest of the Orthodox Church*<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. *The position of emigrés. Educational institutions.*

We cannot, within the limits of this article, attempt to deal with all the many aspects of the religious training of Russian youth. We will therefore confine ourselves to the facts which have come under our own observation in the Russian parishes in Western Europe and more especially in France among the young generation of Russian emigrés.

First of all, we must say something about the emigrés. By definition, the emigré is one who is deprived of his fatherland and cut off from all his family relationships; he usually lacks adequate financial resources and does not enjoy the human atmosphere of his own country. His children are educated in the schools of the country which gives them shelter; learning therefore involves far more time and effort for them. They become impregnated with the culture of a friendly yet foreign nation, and gradually forget their native tongue. These children are quickly assimilated to the native population when they are the offspring of mixed marriages.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Victor YOURIEFF was born in Moscow in 1893. Artillery officer, 1913. Officer in the 1914-1918 war. He left Russia and came to Bulgaria in 1920, then to France in 1925. From 1929 to 1932 he studied at the Orthodox Institute of Theology (Paris). He became (1939) priest of the Russian Church, rue Olivier-de-Serres; then (1945) President of the Christian Movement of Russian Students. — Address: rue Olivier-de-Serres, Paris, FRANCE (Éditor's note).

Russian emigrés, earning their living most frequently by daily work, cannot afford out of their meagre wages to raise the considerable sums necessary for their own boarding and secondary schools. Nevertheless in spite of these handicaps, the Russian emigré population has succeeded in establishing several centres of education.

There have been in existence two boarding houses for Russian children for the last few years : at Versailles and at Villemoisson (Seine-et-Oise). The two of them can accommodate about 150 pupils, of both sexes from 4 to 17. Each has its chapel and resident chaplain. The children go to the national schools and imbibe a pagan atmosphere. But in the boarding houses, the life of the orthodox Church creates a certain atmosphere and to some extent employs their time, thus neutralising the pernicious influence of the secular surroundings.

For twenty five years a Russian secondary school has existed in Paris ; it has about 250 pupils. The curriculum provides for religious instruction, but there is no permanent chapel in the building. On the eve of Christmas and Easter religious services are held in a temporary chapel at which all the pupils and their teachers receive the sacraments.

## *2. Thursday schools.*

As in the Catholic parishes, catechism classes are given on Thursdays, called by the Russians " Thursday schools." But, unlike the Catholic ones, these classes cater for national as well as religious training, for instruction is given in language, history and geography. In most of them Russian singing is also taught ; the beauty of form and matter make the Russian song an excellent medium for the national Russian spirit, much more efficacious than word of mouth instruction about distant Russia.

As a general rule the children come to the Thursday school for three hours. One hour is given to the actual teaching of the catechism, the two others to Russian studies.

In Russia, before the revolution, the children were brought up in the religious atmosphere of their families, in the orthodox traditions of their country, amid all the varied influences from which they are now completely severed. As it is now, these catechism classes are often their only religious education. Under these conditions, it will be understood how precious the thirty lessons of the school year are for sowing the seed of eternal life in these young souls.

In his article on "The difficulties of religious life in childhood and youth," Archpriest Serge Tchetverikoff writes: "A distinction must be made between knowledge of God and knowledge about God. The first is perception of God by intuition; the second is within the province of reason and memory. The catechist must be able to teach the children about God in such a way that they are led from the knowledge of reason to apprehend Him in their souls."

To achieve this result it is first of all necessary to revise the method by which the old catechisms, dating from before the Revolution presented the fundamental truths of the Orthodox Faith. The religious teaching of former days was founded for the most part on what was called "official" theology and consisted chiefly in moral statements. Distinct from the theology of the "Holy Fathers" this religious teaching had all the defects of the "official theology." For instance, God was represented to the children as the all-powerful Ruler, the lawgiver who spent his eternity in forbidding, commanding, threatening, punishing or rewarding. Consequently, the Christian's moral life was dominated by the fear of punishment, or became a blind and unreasoning submission to the fearsome authority of the Creator. But God as the benevolent Father and Friend, as Spouse and Brother in the Person of Jesus Christ; God as luminous Truth for the pure of heart, as the supreme inspiration of life, God as Charity in the Holy Spirit, and, finally, as surpassing all human understanding by His perfection; and the Holy Trinity, the perfect union of Charity and the prototype of our union in Holy Church; this true picture of God was drowned under the flood of moral norms.

Here, for instance, is what is said of the Blessed Trinity in an old manual which is on the whole no worse than any other: "We cannot comprehend in what way God is at once unique in substance and three in person, but God Himself *commands us to believe this and we must therefore admit that it is so.*" It is obvious that the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is not fully accessible to reason, but it must not be forgotten that God — and in this His system is divine — *reveals Himself* to us in our hearts, and in living the true religious life we acquire a knowledge of Him. The impossibility of comprehending God is certainly not a prohibition against knowing Him. This prohibition does not and cannot exist. As for the human impossibility of comprehension, it is the result of His incommensurable Perfection, of His inaccessible Beauty and of His Holiness to which one may not approach lightly without danger. This is what children must be made to feel.

Faith, like Charity, is inseparably linked with liberty. To force it upon anyone is sacrilege.

The miracles of Jesus Christ were also treated in this manner as an obligation, almost as a command, to be believed. Our Lord performed them in order to reveal His almighty power and *force us* to believe in His divinity. Need we recall to mind that Our Lord expressly refused to perform any miracles merely to be spectacular, and that He did not ask for faith as a *result*, but as a condition of their being performed.

In these old handbooks, orthodox doctrine is handled throughout in this juridical spirit and is reduced to a presentation of the Christian's duties and behaviour. This moralising aridity cannot but chill religious feeling.

In reality, Christian life and religious doctrine are inseparable. Christian dogma must therefore be given in its entirety. In practice this means that one must in the first place stress incessantly the fundamental truths: the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, perfect union in Charity, Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit whom we are called upon to receive through the Church. Then, we must strive to present the different points of doctrine in their dependence on one another and thus make a synthesis of it all.

The whole method, then, of religious instruction needs revising.

Catechism lessons cannot be treated in the same way as secular ones which require merely superficial consideration and memory work. They should be more like "study circles," conversations in which the priest questions his pupils. They are thus trained to take an active part and gradually led to a stage at which they can themselves answer questions.

It must be recognised that children are capable of receiving Christian truths in their entirety, though these will be assimilated in a child way. There cannot be two sets of religious beliefs; one for grownups and the other for children. It is high time to abandon the idea that children are at the spiritual level of the Old Testament and that the revelation of the New Testament, especially true Christian liberty, is inaccessible to them. It is wrong to teach children their catechism as if it were made up simply of orders and prohibitions or to refuse to explain certain theological truths on the pretext that they could not understand. We can prove that children are capable of clear theological ideas and of arriving at their own conclusions on the truths of the Faith, by some examples taken from conversations at the Thursday Schools.

I was explaining the Creed to children of 12 to 13. I told them that the



guardian angels are man's best friends. In the course of our earthly life we make several true friends whom we love dearly, but these friends have their own separate lives different from ours. The angel guardian has no separate earthly life of his own, he only lives the life of the person whom he is looking after. He is our companion, friend and guide all our life long ; he will accompany us in the hour of our death through the terrible gates of death and will come with us before Jesus Christ on the Judgment day. I asked the children if they knew a prayer to their angel guardian and if they said it ? Instead of answering, one boy asked me a question : " Why must we pray to the angel guardian apart from God ? If God is Spirit and the angel guardian is also a spirit, in Heaven they are one. " I answered : " What about you ? Are you a spirit ? " — " Yes. " — " Well, you are not the same as God and you pray to Him. Don't mix up your angel guardian with God, but pray to him. "

A little girl asked me in her turn : " After the Last Judgment some people will go to Hell ; what will their angel guardians do then ? " — I answered briefly : " They will continue to pray for them. " But I know that my answer was incomplete for the question raised the problem of " apocatastasis " developed by St. Gregory of Nazianzen.

With reference to the prayer of Jesus Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, the pupils nearly always ask : " Who is Our Lord praying to, since He is God ? To Himself ? " In reply, I explain to them the meaning of the verses 6-8 in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians and the 29th verse of chapter 14 of St. John's Gospel, speaking of the " kenosis " of the Lord, that is to say His voluntarily depriving Himself of His divinity, by which he showed forth His unlimited love for us sinners.

The Thursday Schools' course also includes the study of religious and Slavonic chant, besides preparation for the sacraments. The pupils, their parents and teachers receive the sacraments on the eve of the Feasts of Christmas and Easter.

In France, the attendance of pupils at the Thursday schools is between 500 and 600.

# First Steps in Teaching Religion in deChristianised Rural Districts

by REV. Albert LANQUETIN

*Chaplain National of the "Mouvement Familial Rural"*<sup>1</sup>

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In the first section of this issue we considered the influence of the so-called lay schools on the religious development of the country child. His religious formation has little hope of being effective if based on easy-going cut-and-dry methods. Experience and reflection have evolved syllabuses and handbooks which we wish to bring to the reader's notice.

## I. *Adapting the Religious Instruction.*

There is no ready-made or automatic method. Before any intellectual and "a fortiori" any literal training, it is essential to awaken the child's feelings. This is really the parents' duty, but has rarely been carried out. One must arouse in them a sense of the sacred and divine, and even from the first by reverent and prayerful postures; arouse also some concern over the problem of death (but not so as to frighten), and above all, attach the heart of the child to Christ's person even before it is possible to speak to him about the Incarnation.

After that, the catechetical instruction itself ought to take life as its starting point in order to lead up to Life.<sup>2</sup>

Pupils of the traditional school would open out under it both naturally and supernaturally, free from the restraint of the classroom. Pupils of the «*écoles nouvelles*» would recognise in it the inspiring empiricism to which they are accustomed, but transformed and crowned by doctrine that speaks to the heart. Both

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<sup>1</sup> See *Lumen Vitae*, I (1946), n° 3. — Address: rue Vaneau, 30, Paris VII<sup>e</sup>, FRANCE (Note de l'éditeur).

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller understanding of what follows, see *Le catéchisme au village* par A. LANQUETIN et M. MUNICH, Paris, Éditions ouvrières.

classes, in the very discovery of the innate satisfaction that belongs to the religious attitude, would find the way easy to that higher utilitarianism of grace and salvation.

*Life as the starting point.* From the age of seven or eight the child's mind — that of the country child — develops mainly by observation and personal discovery.

The priest or his fellow workers (more often the latter) ought to open up tracts of discovery, in nature, family life, the various crafts, the village... and this can be done in close touch with the child welfare movements (in France, the Cœurs Vaillants and Ames Vaillantes préjacistes).

Starting from these observed facts, the idea of God is suggested, His omnipotence, immensity, eternity, infinite goodness, etc. One can also discover a whole host of secular traditions full of Christian significance which has been lost or has degenerated into superstition, but which can be rediscovered with equally great profit and wonder.

The cleverer ones can, at a suitable time, be got to discover Christ from the moral aspect in the gospels and later to look for scenes and sayings as foundation and illustration of Christian dogma.

The lives of the heroes of the Old Testament and of the Saints in the New Testament afford a rich mine to one who is trying to cultivate religious feeling and to inculcate practical and energetic Christianity. Telling the stories is not the only thing; the beautiful and true narratives should be acted if possible by small groups; but they must first become convinced of their truth. Nothing so helps this as reference to the school manuals (which they must know thoroughly); showing the chronological parallelism between sacred history and that of classical antiquity, between that of France and the Church — St Louis, Joan of Arc, Vincent de Paul, are national heroes, even for the écoles laïques; St Francis de Sales was a great French writer, etc.

In his treatment of the Old Testament the teacher obviously must avoid giving the school governor a handle for just complaint by an over simple literalism which shows ignorance of the different literary genres, but of course without loss to the magnificent symbolism of Holy Scripture.

*Life as the goal.* The foremost aim is to practise the commandments of Jesus and all the virtues. This can only be brought about effectively by being in touch with the child's family, and then by group activities which should be few and simple, not too artificial

and fitting into the framework of a rural community. Here, once again, collaboration with the country child movement is highly desirable.

Such activities are not to be confused with the catechetical activities and other games meant to help the child to memorise the maximum of religious vocabulary, or to surround the catechism with an atmosphere of joy and confidence.

The catechetical activities give scope for efforts of observation and discovery and, at the same time, for efforts in the practical application of doctrine, without prejudice to certain short writings.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. *Handbooks.*

In certain very dechristianised districts or such as have been much affected by the "écoles nouvelles" one must not be in a hurry to give the child a handbook. The ancient "disciplina arcani" holds good here : a handbook too soon runs the risk of clumsily introducing the Eucharist, for example, to the young reader before he has the idea of God, and before he knows anything about the human existence of Our Saviour.

A country priest M. abbé André parish priest of Calvisson (Gard) has had the idea and with his sister's help brought out a small handbook meant specially for very infants in such districts (or rather for their teachers). He limits himself to suggesting the idea of God, and training the soul in simple virtue, the rest being rightly judged as impossible as yet.<sup>4</sup> Afterwards the "cours préparatoire" can be used and then the "cours moyen" of *Vivre en chrétien au village*.<sup>5</sup> A higher course is now in course of preparation.

The *preparatory course* is very fully illustrated. The first third of the book is all about training to know God ; the second is devoted to the life of Our Lord as told by children in such manner as to provide a first initiation into the mystery of Christ, Son of God and Saviour ; the third is concerned with God and the Sacraments, the Eucharist, but always with regard to the vital needs of young pupils. Care has been taken never to go beyond the intel-

<sup>3</sup> See below the mention of *Feuilles des Mamans*.

<sup>4</sup> *Vers notre Père du Ciel*, chez l'auteur.

<sup>5</sup> *Vivre en chrétien au village*, cours préparatoire. Paris, Éditions ouvrières. — *Feuilles des Mamans* (questionnaires et devoirs) correspondant au cours préparatoire. Paris, Éditions ouvrières. — Y. DANIEL et A. LANQUETIN, *Vivre en chrétien au village*. Paris, Éditions ouvrières.



lectual capacity of the rural nine year olds and still greater care to centre in Revelation and the practice of divine Charity.

The *cours moyen* gives the complete course of the catechism on Holy Communion, but in a psychological and living order (not one based on logic as in the official text).<sup>6</sup>

It is illustrated by pages from Scripture and by stories, apt parallels, facts and images borrowed from country life.

These handbooks based on much catechetical experience in rural areas are in real country folk language. Improvements will be made in future editions in the light of further experience. We are confident that, as they stand they provide a useful instrument for catechists, for those especially whose pupils are in non-Christian schools. Moreover, they have this advantage that they arouse the interest of adults. Parents, weak in the practise of their religion, use them readily enough to help their little ones in their study and to live up to Christian teaching.

Here, in our opinion, is the beginning, a modest one still, of a solution to that difficult problem of how to graft the child's Faith on to the Christianity, only too often a very drowsy one, of the parents and of the entire rural community. The aim is to arouse the Christian energy of the neighbourhood while getting solid Faith into the children. That of most of them would only be shaky, faced by the "écoles neutres" such as we have described, if it had only the word of the priest to rest upon.

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<sup>6</sup> Not only has the official text been added (in the complete edition) but also the principal questions have been sorted out and given appropriate places in the scheme of the book, and added also as an appendix to each chapter.

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# A Manual Which Reveals New Tendencies in Religious Teaching in Western Germany

by DR. JOSEF HAEFNER  
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These lines will achieve their purpose if they provoke discussion amongst Christians abroad on one of the most difficult and important post-war problems: the religious training of youth today. On the 10th March 1948, in his allocution to the priests about to preach Lenten stations at Rome, the Sovereign Pontiff said: "One is appalled by the thought of the number of young people between 15 and 20 years of age who are growing up outside the Church owing to mere prejudice, and for lack of spiritual nourishment suitable to their age, needs and, to some extent, their tastes." Should this not lead religious teachers who are conscious of their responsibilities to seek for methods of instruction more in conformity with the psychology of the young?

To avoid any misunderstanding, we must make it clear that, by "religious training of youth," we mean the religious education of the pupils in their last three years at secondary schools and the higher religious teaching given to students of the universities.

Two theories have been put forward on this subject at recent congresses and in public discussions.

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<sup>1</sup> Born at Kassel in 1910, the Reverend Josef HAEFNER studied at the Düren Gymnasium and at Treves Seminary. Ordained priest in 1934, he was curate from 1935 to 1937 and taught Religion from 1937 to 1939 in a Girls' School, at the same time studying at Bonn University. He took his Doctorat in Philosophy in 1941. Since 1947 he has been a member of the Council of Studies and teacher of Religion at the Gymnasium of the Three Kings in Cologne. — Works: *Leben und Schaffen des Würzburger Philosophen Franz Hoffmann*, Bonn, University Press 1941. — *Der Christ in der Welt*, Cologne, Balduin Pick, 1946. — *Fron oder Freiheit*, *ibid.*, 1947. — *Zeitphänomene*, Bergisch-Gladbach, Herder, 1949. — Address: Luxemburgerstr. 218/111, Köln, GERMANY (Editor's note).

One is that the instruction should be confined to the sound old truths of theological tradition and to the method of our predecessors, without taking into account the present day upheavals. Young people must learn their catechism which, however, should be put before them in a somewhat expanded form.

The upholders of the opposite theory realise that the youth of today has grown out of the old traditions. Their deepest needs must be understood, and the problems of the present day given a large place in our teaching. Religious instruction will thus follow the vagaries of life. Conscious of its own resources, it will recognise and foster the true values of life wherever found. On a carefully prepared lesson, they will be subjected to the light of Faith; earthly values will have their imperfection revealed, but they will also gather richness from the fulness of Christianity.

Dr Henri Rösseler of Cologne University is the principal exponent of this point of view. According to Dr F. X. Arnold, professor of pastoral theology at the University of Tübingen, Dr Rösseler "is meeting the situation of religious teaching" and is endeavouring to "replace the doctrinaire by a live system of instruction."

He has given his principles of religious teaching and their practical consequences in a recent work on "The spirit and content of teaching the Catholic religion in secondary schools"<sup>2</sup> and also in a two volumed manual under the title of *Christlicher Glaube* (The Christian Faith).<sup>3</sup>

Each of these two volumes contains two sections: the *treatise* properly so-called, a methodical statement of Christian doctrine, and the *reader*, consisting of more than 400 chosen extracts — poetry, literary and philosophical quotations, liturgical texts, canonicles, decisions of the Councils of the Church and dogmatic definitions — to which are added the most remarkable dogmatic literary passages in the Old Testament.

This reader is the most important from the teaching point of view; it is a real "tool" book (*Arbeitsbuch*) with which the professor can build up his course. The aim is to show how each subject of the course has its special place in our life.

The arrangement of the *treatise* is inspired by the same purpose of starting off from daily life. Here are the headings:

<sup>2</sup> *Geist und Gestalt des kath. Religionsunterrichts auf der höheren Schule*, Köln, J. P. Bachem, 1949.

<sup>3</sup> *Christlicher Glaube*, Köln, J. P. Bachem, 1948.

## FIRST PART : HUMAN DISORDER.

I. *The poverty of our earthly life.*

II. *The manifold activities of our life.* — Pleasures — The sphere of action of the superman — Stoic resignation — The negation of life — Drifting along.

III. *The struggle of the spirit.* — The spirit and its presentiment of eternity — The spirit and reality — The aberrations of the spirit — The fall of the spirit — Return to common sense.

## SECOND PART : THE DIVINE EXPLANATION.

The Old Testament as a literary work — The hidden God — The Creator of nature — The God of humanity and culture — The nature of man and sin — Humanity and original sin in the Old Testament — The lot of man and the promise of redemption — The servants of God and the law of their mission.

## THIRD PART : THE DIVINE /HUMAN REALISATION.

I. *The historical life of Jesus.* — The outward manifestation of Jesus — The moral character of Jesus — The mystery of Jesus — The personality of Jesus in the light of His miracles — The miracle of the Resurrection — The witness of Jesus.

II. *The Life of Jesus according to Faith.* — Et incarnatus est — Et homo factus est — Pro nobis passus et mortuus est — Et resurrexit — Et ascendit in coelum — Et emisit Spiritum Sanctum — Et iterum venturus est.

III. *The Vision of the Trinity of God.* — Sancta Trinitas unus Deus — The Trinitarian aspect of Faith.

## FOURTH PART : CHRISTIAN REALITY.

I. *The work of Christ on earth.* — The Church in its historical development — The Church a mystery of grace and freedom.

II. *The Catholic.* — Creature of nature and child of grace — Divine adoption by baptism — The Holy Spirit — The ordering of life — The sacred mission of the priesthood and of marriage — The Christian and sin — The Christian and sacrifice — Death, consecration of life — The present and future life of the Christian.

According to Dr Rösseler, religious instruction forms an integral part of the scholastic system, that is to say of an institution whose purpose is the scientific dissemination of truth and human knowledge ; this instruction therefore cannot renounce scientific methods and principles. But — and here is the pedagogic innovation — religious instruction cannot remain abstract, not adopt the academ-



ic style, as has happened with us. Since the beginning of the century, Catholic theology has let itself be influenced by positivism, according to which all valid proofs must be experimental or founded in mathematics. Formalism and intellectualism have stifled man's feeling of his essential unity: school manuals and catechisms have lacked human interest. The direct and vivid language of the Bible has steadily yielded to the abstract terminology of theology.

It is important for us today to escape from this chill atmosphere of the Schools in order to be more in touch with life. The God of Catholic teaching is not simply a metaphysical problem, the "God of the philosophers," an enigma to solve. He is Jahvé whose infinite life is proclaimed on every page of the Old Testament and whose paternal love has been revealed to us by Jesus.

Let us base our teaching then chiefly on the Bible revelation, and compare its message with profane literature, the witness of humanity's strife with the Eternal.

Our religious teaching ought to produce effects beyond the classroom walls and enlighten the pupils' minds on all events of history, of our own times and of human life. They should learn to discover in the daily happenings of their own lives the significance of questions discussed in class; and our answers will find confirmation in everyday life. This concrete method will certainly succeed in eliminating the abstract. It is addressed to the whole man. It gives to youth a sense of the organic unity of Faith and life; teaches them that our best efforts spring from dogma in action. It thus becomes clear that religion is no arid speculation, no technical speciality, not a matter of aesthetic taste, but an essential element in all true formation, an element to be absorbed and perfected in ourselves.

We will give some examples to enable the reader to understand better the spirit and method of this important work.

First of all, we take passages from the *two first parts*: "Man's disorder" and "The divine explanation."

The discussion on pantheism, materialism, etc., does not start from abstract ideas, as is usually the case, but with quotations from intellectual circles in which these views are held. The pupil should not only know the intellectual content of these doctrines, but also the literary beauty and attractive presentation which cause their success. The critic of the writings of von Rilke, Lessing, Spinoza, etc. learns to distinguish truth from error. From them one rises to the transcendent Christian truths.

Concerning the Fall and Original Sin, the Redemption, it is not enough to make a simple statement of the dogma. Modern minds must be made to

grasp that sin, far from being a fiction of a phantom world, is a reality in our soul and body. Shakespeare is an unimpeachable witness of the reality of a bad conscience in his Richard III and the sleepwalking Lady Macbeth. Even more striking is Dostoiewski's description of Raskolnikow. The devilish power of sin and its disintegrating effect is revealed, and this is in accordance with the conclusions of modern psychiatry (Allers). In this series Dante's descriptions of Hell find a place ; they are a dramatisation of these states of soul.

The reprobation and obstination in hell are also illustrated by Mephisto and Prometheus, in the psychological considerations of Master Ekhard and Bernanos, and also in the demoniac figure, incredibly fascinating and coldly calculating, of the "Brothers Karamazov" of Dostoiewski, whom Guardini has admirably introduced to us. The reading of these extracts is *not a religious teaching*, but a *preparation* enabling the soul to absorb a great deal more easily the truth and wisdom of the Bible revelation.

In the *third part* called "Divine/human realisation" the author tries to make the person of Jesus live. The passages furnish ample means of comparing Jesus with Socrates, Buddha and Confucius.

Next come characteristic extracts from writers dealing with Christ from the rationalist point of view (Renan, Strauss, etc.). The result is always the same : Christ stands out as a unique being who cannot be explained by purely human reasoning. Studying passages illustrative of modern unrest and the ancient Christian wisdom, the believer finds the solution of the problems of human existence today in the life of Jesus.

In the paragraphs on the doctrine of the Trinity, it seems that the writer is trying for the first time to bring this dogma down to the level of youthful minds, as the primary and central dogma, the influence of which covers our whole life. From the numerous passages given emerges the idea that the Christian should not disdain anything that is true and beautiful on earth ; indeed, that the mission of Christianity is not to condemn but to save the real values of life and the making them a part of the fullness which resides in the Holy Trinity.

The *last part*, "Christian reality," considers Catholic doctrine as a human value and a penetrating force ; it shows the sacramental formation of the Christian as moral behaviour answering to a sacramental call. This is the essential part of the work, because of the value of the teaching contained therein ; it shows the incomparable influence of Christian truth on our life and our perfection.

In its contents and presentation this book breaks away from the dull type of ordinary manuals. It aims at being live, so as to influence its users even after students days are over.

In the midst of the present philosophical chaos we may perhaps wish to revive the teaching of the classic ecclesiastical writers, St. Thomas Aquinas in particular. This will not be done by talking a lot or exclusively about this great doctor, but much more in

making our own his formulae and clear expositions, which answer the numerous and urgent questions which the Faith presents to the modern mind.

As for dogmatic formulae, which we must retain, they must be vivified by an interior experience, a kind of contemplation. Rösse-ler gives us some examples. Usually, with him, a formula does not have its place at the beginning nor at the end, but just where it is wanted, when "the difficulties arising from a purely natural intellectual attitude have been eliminated by other considerations linked to experience of the pupils, the mind's eye turns to the supernatural and the soul is ready to receive the Faith."

In a letter from Mgr Montini to the president of an Italian Study Week, the Sovereign Pontiff certainly was alluding to an efficient up-to-date system of religious education, when he spoke of the "voices of the good shepherds" who fructify and make the Christian beliefs to grow in souls journeying towards a better world.

May these brief notes on the new tendencies of religious teaching in western Germany, arising out of our present situation, be useful to the readers of "Lumen Vitae" and promote a fruitful exchange of ideas on a question which is common to all members of the "Una Sancta."

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# Summer Schools or « Working Weeks » for University Students During Vacation

by Heinrich Suso BRAUN, O. F. M. Cap.  
*Students' chaplain at Innsbruck, Austria*<sup>1</sup>

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It is nothing new to discover that even the most individualist university student is largely the product of his environment from which it is very difficult for him to free himself. But the point is whether all the consequences of this fact have been sufficiently realised by the parochial clergy. The personal salvation of the individual must certainly be our first concern ; nevertheless, the priest has the responsibility for creating a Christian environment in the university. There are many difficulties in the way, for the constituent elements, especially the commonroom, are to a large extent impervious to clerical influence. And, with regard to State universities, the Church cannot control the nominations.

We must then begin with the student. We need not dwell on the very obvious difficulties in the way of creating a truly Christian atmosphere in the universities. One may be mentioned : the continual change among the students who are here today, gone to-morrow.

There are numerous organisations existing for the purpose. Religious and philosophical lectures only hold the individual students for one or two hours a week ; far too short a time for Christian influences to hold their own against the constant weight of indifferentism. The student, unless he lives in a Christian home, is not conscious of Christian surroundings ; and it is precisely the

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<sup>1</sup> Born in 1904, Fr. Heinrich Suso BRAUN entered the Order of Capuchin Friars in 1923. After studying at Innsbruck and at Rome, he taught philosophy in the houses of study of his Order. In 1943, Fr. BRAUN was appointed chaplain to the students of Innsbruck, and, since 1945, he has, each sunday, given a talk on Radio Innsbruck-Vorarlberg. — His works are : *Der namenlose Gott*, Heidelberg, Kerl, 1938. — *Humanismus als religiöses Anliegen*, Innsbruck, Felizian Rauch, 1946. — *Vom Humor des Christen*, Paderborn, Schöningh, 1941. — *Radio-Predigten* (drei Bände), Innsbruck, Tyrolia. — Address : Kaiserjägerstrasse 6, Innsbruck, AUSTRIA (Editor's note).



fact of Christian surroundings which makes the Christian personality.

But if it cannot be achieved during the term, what about the vacations ?

The above reflections caused us to try an experiment we have had in Austria since 1946.

Each diocese organises a "*Week of Work*" for its university students, the aim of which, explicitly or otherwise, is the strengthening of the students in their Faith by arranging that they shall go to distinctively Christian areas. Ten to fifteen of these weeks are organised during the long vacation in Austria, not to mention the Salzburg Weeks, which have such an enormous clientèle that community life would be hard to arrange.

The students are grouped together according to dioceses, so that they get to know one another, even if from different Universities. In this way, diocesan associations are easier to form later on.

Although organised in conjunction with the society of "University Youth of Austria," the weeks are open to any students who care to come.

The summer weeks are when possible supplemented by ski camps in the winter. But the latter are chiefly organised from the university towns and do not come under quite the same category.

In order to attract as great a number as possible, it is most necessary to avoid any semblance of 'spiritual exercise' in the organisation of these weeks. But spiritual exercises are given their due place. Thus, one third of the time is given to religious and moral lectures ; one third to the intellectual side, showing the Christian solution of problems raised in the various Faculties ; finally, the rest of the time is devoted to social life (lectures on poetry, music, folklore, excursions).

For the same reason, the meetings do not take place in a house of retreats, but in an old castle (Wernberg, Ort bei Gmunden, etc.), an hotel or boarding house (Haus Michael in the Tirol, Ried am Wolfgangsee), or perhaps in an abbey which can offer accommodation outside the enclosure. In every case, an appropriate atmosphere is provided by picturesque or historical surroundings.

Religious exercises are not too numerous (Holy Mass, morning and evening prayers). Conferences and discussions during the day take place whenever possible in the open air, in the forest, on the lake, during excursions. The evenings are spent socially.

The conferences during the sessions are grouped round a particular topic, for instance "World-power and Christian power" (Kremsmünster, 1949); "The sacramental life" (Saalbach, 1948); "Profession and vocation" (Matrei, 1947); "The reign of God in the contemporary world" (Matrei, 1948); "Society, marriage and the family" (Mehrerau, 1949); "Man and economics" (Mehrerau, 1949). The Seckau meetings (which usually last two or three weeks every year) allow of a thorough treatment of Christian doctrine over a period of four years. The summer schools are suitable for all students as a general rule, but the one at Kremsmünster is more especially for the benefit of young graduates, especially those destined for an academic career.

The lecturers are usually professors from the universities, specialists who themselves exemplify the Christian synthesis of Faith and science, and who are willing to take on the extra work for the sake of the coming generation. In the calm atmosphere of the country and the social summer evenings an intercourse is possible which cannot be achieved in the frigid environment of the lecturerroom. The bishop and leaders often join in and take advantage of the opportunity of making the acquaintance with their future helpers.

As far as conditions allow, both sexes take part in the weeks, for it is important not to segregate those who are together in lecturerroom and laboratory.

What are the *results*? It does not take more than half a day for the students to form themselves into a truly family party, even when they have never met before. A Christian fellow-feeling arises and this bond persists after they have returned to the university and is an enormous help to the chaplain's task during the academic year.

The town is far away and circumstances are conducive to listening and asking questions and airing the particular problems of each. The Christian atmosphere is impressive, and altogether it is not to be wondered at that the courses are overcrowded. Sometimes we allow students who have taken their leaving certificate at the high schools so that it may be easier for them to adapt themselves to university circles.

We may remark in conclusion that foreign students are also present and cause valuable contacts to be made and new horizons to be opened up.

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# Sense of Responsibility and Spirit of Initiative in the «Neudeutschland» Youth Movement

by Heinrich JANSEN CRON, S. J.

*Editor of "Leuchtturm",  
Chaplain of the "Neudeutschen Publizisten", Cologne, Germany*<sup>1</sup>

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Köln den 10. Januar 1950

Dear Friend,

When we met recently in Cologne, we spoke of the heartening growth of "Neudeutschland," the former association of youth from the secondary schools, now having a men's section (1600 members), university groups "Neudeutschen" (1100 members) and "Neudeutsche Jungengemeinschaft" (12.000 members).<sup>2</sup>

The youth movement "Neudeutschland," officially suppressed

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<sup>1</sup> Born in 1891 at Aix-la-Chapelle, Dr. Heinrich JANSEN CRON first worked in industry and was among the early disciples of Carl Sonnenschein. In 1913 he entered the Society of Jesus. Since 1922 he has devoted himself to the Neudeutschland Association. Since 1926 he has edited the review *Leuchtturm*, which, suppressed by the nazis, reappeared in 1947. Father JANSEN CRON has published many booklets: with the firm of Bachem, Cologne: *Der gute Mensch* (1940), *Weihnachten fern der Heimat* (1941), *Tathärte u. Gelassenheit* (1940) *Neues Leben* (1941); through Alsatia of Colmar: *Zum Andenken des Herrn* (1943), *Was heisst Erbsünde* (1943), etc. Since the war his chief works have been: *Kellergespräche* (under the pseudonym of Jan A. TOTSEMBERGH; Cologne, Bachem, 1946), *Christus Künden, Gedanken für die Predigt* (*ibid.*, 1948), *Der Brennspiegel* (Bergisch Gladbach, Herder, 1950), *Kleine Lebenskunst* (*ibid.*, 1950). — Address: Stolze Str. 1a, Köln, GERMANY (Editor's note).

<sup>2</sup> We refer to Western Germany, for there is no chance for it in the Eastern Zone at present.

by the nazis in 1934, was carried on underground. It survived the troubles and came out of war and captivity as a resolute "men's society." Seven thousand of its members were killed during the war.

You asked me whence these young men drew their courage amidst such harmful surroundings, and I promised to write you an article on the subject. You will, I hope, forgive me if I use the simpler form of a letter in which to set down the fruits of my experience of twenty five years and my reflections on them.

"Neudeutschland" was founded in 1919 by Cardinal von Hartman and Father Ludwig Esch, S. J. This association had a rapid success in taking what were the good points in the Free German Youth Movement (*Freie deutsche Jugendbewegung*) and "baptising" them. It replaced the ruling principle of that movement, "Gesetz vom Hohen Meissner" (1913), by the Catholic programme, called "Hirschbergprogramm."

This programme, drawn up in 1923, defined the principles of the formation of the "Neudeutschen" for a life of personal initiative and responsibility. Here are the actual terms of its charter :

OUR AIM : *A new life in Christ*.—The "Neudeutschland" association, an active movement, aims at the Christian formation of the whole man. Young people, faithful to the ideal and team spirit of "Neudeutschen," desire to live a full human life and build up a new moral and social order as laid down in the encyclicals of recent Popes.

The apostolate, founded on the interior life, is the characteristic of the association : *A Christian life* in us and around us.

This life in Christ can only be the work of a youth movement : sincere, natural, capable of taking on personal responsibilities ; by these means the movement will foster a *new* life, in contrast to the instability and degeneracy of modern ways of life.

*In Christ*, God-Man and Head of the Church, a "Neudeutsche" finds his strength and purpose in life. With Him, he goes through life ever seeking

OUR MEANS : I. *The will to become men*.—God having sanctified the whole of creation in Christ, God made man, the "Neudeutsche" recognises all the natural and cultural values in life.

A. *The appreciation of nature*.—A "Neudeutsche" lives simply, without duplicity. He loves his body and disciplines it. An alert mind, a courageous heart and a rich sensibility seem to him essential in a man. He takes part in the pleasures of the youth movement : songs, excursions, games ; he is a pleasant companion and does not give way to the unhealthy temptations of the modern world. He loves his country, the history and the culture of his people.

B. *Desire for union*.—The "Neudeutsche" knows that, by the Divine Will, life reaches its perfection in society. The family is his personal home ;



at the foot of the Cross the harmony between nature and grace, prayer and work, the kingdom of God and the world. He desires to glorify the Father through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The foundation principle of the Association is expressed as follows : grace supposes nature, elevates it and completes it on the way of the Cross. he gives of his best to it. The Association forms his spiritual home ; his attitude in it is a measure of his fidelity to its programme. His natural home is among the German people and he can mix with all classes of society. He is a good companion and faithful to his friends. The hour of sorrow and humiliation finds him close to his own people. Finally, above his country, he does not forget the great family of nations.

*C. Desire for action.* — The needs of the times and the consciousness of a mission require creative and generous men. The Association needs keen active members who have initiative. Each "Neudeutsche" must work as much as possible, at school, in his family, at his profession, in his social group and in public life. He will thus help in establishing a new social and political order.

*II. Desire to live as a Christian.* — Christ must live in as perfect a humanity as possible. Human and Christian perfection are not exclusive, nor can they be realised separately, side by side.

*A.* The "Neudeutsche" lives by Christ, is intimately united to Him, his Friend and Model, in a common supernatural destiny. He aims at a spiritual life by means of prayer, reading Holy Scripture, by retreats, self-discipline and sacrifice, all in imitation of Christ. His love for Mary, Virgin and Mother of God, gives him strength and joy in following his Saviour's footsteps, reveals the model of true Christian womanhood. Thus his *appreciation of nature* is fulfilled in Christ.

*B.* The Association is rooted deep in the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, and this is the most intimate home of the "Neudeutsche." The liturgy and the sacraments are the nourishment of his life, while he looks upon its teaching as the sanctuary of truth.

He is always faithful to the Pope, the representative of God on earth, and also to the bishops in communion with the Sovereign Pontiff. Trustful collaboration between priest and layman is one of the chief characteristics of the Association. Conscious of its responsibilities, it ranks among the ecclesiastical organisations. The "Neudeutsche" approaches his neighbour as a brother in Christ. Thus his *will for union* is perfectly realised in the Mystical Body of the Lord.

*C.* Christ calls all who wear his livery in the "Bund" to share in the Church's mission with courage and consciousness of their responsibilities. The "Neudeutsche" is most ardent in the cause of Christ ; he is wholly devoted to His kingdom. He labours and serves, struggles and suffers in the shadow of the Cross, awaiting the glorious return of his Lord. Thus his *desire for action* is realised supernaturally.

This programme contains *the principles of the education of the "Neudeutschen" in a spirit of initiative and personal responsibility*. This spirit of initiative arises from the fact that the Bund was not created to a programme imposed from outside, but issues from the "Young German Movement," an *opposition movement* which early instilled a certain mistrust of a society with decadent morals and outlook, against nature and unworthily of man. However, in the Catholic movement, this attitude of opposition has been corrected by an openness of mind to the message of Christ in the Church.

The criticism of the modern world extended also to practising Catholics. At first, through inexperience or excess of zeal, indiscretions and tactless errors were committed. Fortunately, they were easily rectified and compensated for by the personal character of these well trained men, striving towards an ideal. The thirty years of the Association's existence have proved this to be a fact.

Moreover, the Catholic Youth Movement did also a positive work. It prepared souls to be receptive of all that is true, fine, natural, healthy and noble in accordance with the supernatural message and revelation of Christ, God made man.

The liturgical movement along with meditation on the life of Jesus was the expression of the spiritual life.<sup>3</sup> The training of conscience and the care taken to impress upon the members the *idea of the dignity of the Christian* developed and strengthened their spirit of initiative. They learned how to *protect* themselves, but chiefly how to *strengthen* themselves.

The best supporters of the Association have always been the young men themselves. They take an active part in all its functions, and even, as far as possible, assume the responsibility for services on excursions, at camp, and in social teaching and activities (Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul). The organisation of religious festivals and conferences, contributions to periodicals, either their own or others, make them produce something, expose themselves to criticism, become apostles in their milieu. As junior leaders, they have to convince those younger than themselves, to *shoulder* a real *responsibility* in their family life as well as in the Church. They do not work alone; the Association is always with them to support and guide them.

Experience has shown that many parents have returned to their religious duties and others have led better lives thanks to the fidelity of these young Christian men.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Father Martin MANUWALD'S book, *Christuskreise*.

From the point of view of youth, personal formation is taken very seriously, as the Hirschberg programme leads one to suppose. To this must be added the *assignments* in the spheres of sport, education, religion and school, to which all members are bound, adapted to the age of each.

Every year retreats are arranged, one for boys of from 14 to 15, the other for youths of 17 to 19. In the course of the year, days for Squires and Knights (there are three ranks in the Youth section : aspirants, squires and knights) provide an opportunity for dealing with questions of vital importance for the boys themselves without losing sight of the knowledge of life required by all.

Other *retreats* are organised for the members' parents.

*Evenings for parents* give the chaplain a chance of saying something about the aims and methods of the Association, or upon education in general. This is usually followed by an exchange of views and an animated discussion. In the course of *artistic evenings*, the members can show their talents : games, songs, music, poetry recitations. In this way their families are brought into close contact with the Association. It is a good sign that the " old boys," now married, send their children to the groups to which they themselves formerly belonged.

At Cologne the families of the Neudeutschen never failed to go to the funerals of any of the members killed in the war. It was this custom chiefly which led to the official reorganisation of the Association on the 2nd November 1945. After Mass, the parents came together among the ruins, earnestly begging that the work of the " Neudeutschenbund " should be taken up again. Those who were present at those scenes felt a resurgence of hope and confidence in the creation of a *new atmosphere*, one of dignity and healthiness, out of the present confusion.

*The priests' part* in this youth organisation deserves mention. As I noted above, there are three sections, aspirants, squires and knights, whose ideals have nothing of the romantic in them; but aim at Christian honesty, mutual help, and courage. All the responsibility for the training of the boys in the first two classes rests with the priest. In the older group, the priest is present in his sacerdotal character alone. Apart from this, he is the friend and comrade of the elder ones.

This sketch <sup>4</sup> will give some idea of the work of the " Neudeutsch-

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<sup>4</sup> See the article by J. A. TOTSEMBERGH, *Lumen Vitae*, I (1946), pp. 131-134, on " Deutsche Jugendbewegung " and the situation just after the war.

land" association in turning its youths into men who can rely on themselves and can influence their milieu instead of being shaped by it.

Perhaps, after the turmoil of the war new methods are required. We are too near to recent events to discuss this point. Most of the means which we have described still *prove their efficacy*.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,  
Heinrich JANSEN CRON, S. J.

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# CONCLUSIONS

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## State Schools and Christian Training. A Survey

by George DELCUVE, S. J.

*International Centre for Studies in Religious Education* <sup>1</sup>

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Distinguished educators in various countries and continents have introduced us to the atmosphere of the State schools. Other competent writers : teachers, jurists, statesmen, have made known to us the discussions which have taken place on the subject in Europe, America, Asia and Africa. This general information has been followed up by documentation and by suggestions as to the religious education of the pupils in the State schools. The purpose of these pages is to point out the main ideas contained in the two parts of this issue and to gather together under various headings the scattered observations which corroborate one another and call for further inquiry, if they do not yet afford moral certitude ; and also to mention the suggestions and recommendations most suited to guide the present development of the State schools towards some status that fosters the fulfilment of all legitimate aspirations, including above all the religious sense.

The first paragraph deals with some matters of method underlying the arrangement of this issue.

I. POINTS OF METHODOLOGY. — It is a complicated matter to determine the influence of the neutral school on the moral and religious life of a child, adolescent or young man. In the first place, observations must be tactfully made on very interior dispositions :

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<sup>1</sup> Address : 27, rue de Spa, Brussels, BELGIUM.

on faith or, at least, sense of mystery of life, morals, religious practice. Then, when some development has been revealed, its causes must be found, without the influence of the school environment being either minimised or exaggerated. No matter what kind the school may be, its influence upon a human being endowed with heredity, temperament, a divine life perhaps, a natural and supernatural training, must meet with favourable and hostile elements within the person who goes through its doors for the first time. The pupil, whether schoolboy, or undergraduate, still forms part of other *milieux*: family, youth movement, perhaps parish activities: and also the modern milieu of press, radio, cinema... The school is only one of several, and it would seem that if it acts upon these latter, it also is acted upon by them.

Although difficult to achieve, our plan is not fanciful. The commissions and omissions in the syllabus, instructions on the spirit animating the teaching, facts as to the training, belief or secularism of the teachers, the classes of society from which the pupils are drawn: all these furnish ground for hypotheses to be verified. A discreet continued observation of the children, a comparison in State and other schools of children coming from a more or less similar background, will tell us more than an occasional inquiry. Herein lies the value of the witnesses brought together in this number. The authors are distinguished teachers in public education, priests charged with the religious instruction of children or adolescents in State schools, national directors of Christian education, national chaplains...

If it is difficult to define exactly the true influence of the neutral lay schools, it is easier for each one to *appraise* it, more difficult to agree upon a final valid judgment. Everything depends on the standard taken. Of a young man whose faith has withered away in a rationalist atmosphere, the rationalist will speak of liberation from dogma, of the progress of thought; a Christian will be saddened at this soul now mutilated and impervious to the mysterious confidences of God. Obviously it is from the Christian angle that the authors in this issue — members of the Roman Catholic Church, of the Orthodox Church, of the Church of England, of the Presbyterian Church — have surveyed the spiritual routes. Religious men of other communions will, I think, share this outlook. Further, it is apparent that men, until yesterday enthusiastic for an anthropocentric humanism, are now hesitating before the purely human development of life, whether personal or social, along the lines

of atheism and rationalism. So true it is that history is a guide for life. Please God this volume may help them to find the light towards which their good will is directing them !

II. ADVANTAGES OF THE NEUTRAL AND LAY ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL. — We are not concerned with a comparison between neutral teaching and any other from the point of view of profane study, building, equipment for games. We are treating solely of religion and morality. Now, from this point of view, there are certain advantages in the neutral atmosphere of a school. Different views of life are represented in them ; curiosity is aroused in those who do not share them : assertions, violent denials, scepticism or simply an obstinate silence and abstention... The Christian is thus led to consider carefully what makes him different and to seek to justify the position which is his by reason of his family upbringing. Whether he receives his religious teaching at school or outside it, there is such a disproportion between the time allotted to it and to secular subjects that there is little risk of saturation.

Independent communications bear witness to the following facts :

- 1) *An awakened interest* in religion and as it were a new interest in the religious world,
- 2) *A seeking after* what is essential and an aversion from formalism,
- 3) *A more personal approach* and a disregard for human respect,
- 4) *A sense of an apostolate* among some, sharpened by contact with unbelievers and the indifferent,
- 5) *Perseverance*, often observed in former pupils whose religion has continued to develop in the outside world.

These are substantial advantages. But it would be hard to attribute them to the school itself ; it is rather the occasion than the cause. The conclusion is drawn that this more personal and open religious outlook is met with in those who come from truly Christian families or who themselves are strong characters.

We must also note that this religious outlook is of rare occurrence when we consider the ordinary surroundings from which the pupils are drawn. And again, even with regard to this Christian élite, there is reason to fear that no synthesis is made between religion and human values, since the school does nothing towards such a thing.

In forming a general judgment, we must avoid two extremes. One is to shut one's eyes to the successes, and giving way to a certain determinism, exaggerate the unfavourable influence of the

neutral school atmosphere and so discourage the religious teachers, the well-intentioned parents and the pupils themselves. The other is equally pernicious, and that is to take rare cases and from them to deny the disadvantages — about which we will now speak.

III. THE HARMFUL INFLUENCE OF THE NEUTRAL SCHOOL FROM THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL POINT OF VIEW. — The situation varies in different regions; it also depends on the presence and, chiefly, on the attitude of teachers who are believers. On the whole, the neutral school, while, in one sense, protecting the young Christian from formalism, exposes him to very serious risks.

*Neutrality* — at any rate, as it was usually exercised — leads the pupil to believe, wrongly or rightly, that religion does not play any part either in the opinions or in the lives of his teachers and that in consequence it is of no vital importance. The younger the pupil, the more he inclines to this idea. To a child, a concealed motive is not a sincere one. The adolescent and young man, whose own personal experiences are more complex, do not fall into this error. But they seldom escape from keeping their religion in a separate compartment from secular learning. On the other hand, — there seems to be a paradox here — they run the risk of taking the Christian conception to be just one among many theories which they meet with among their friends or in books and films and which are as attractive as any theoretical Christianity. Eclecticism and relativism are the dangers here. In short, the more or less definite effect of neutrality is a *divided allegiance*. Intellectually, there is a juxtaposition of contradictory concepts. Their piety lies very close to anthropocentric humanism.

This neutrality, not being compatible with education, has in fact evolved towards a *lay dogmatism*, a “lay creed.” Its most characteristic attitude seems to be rationalism: the belief that human reason can solve all problems. Mystery becomes superfluous: natural religion cannot hold its own. Even if the exaggeration of science has now been outmoded, God is not considered to be a necessary hypothesis in order to explain the universe. The history professor thinks himself able to disregard religion and the superhuman interventions which have influenced the development of mankind; the professor of literature explains the Divine Comedy without any reference to the spirit which inspired Dante. That is not all; having turned his back on religion, the teacher ceases



to interest his audience in *human problems, the most fundamental of all*. We can see this at work in more than one country. The faculty of abstraction does not rise above the sphere of mathematics. The pupils have to absorb a mass of data which is superficial. The free inner soul is neglected in favour of the body under the rule of determinism. Is it surprising that such an education becomes more and more utilitarian? At present, the new methods make the mind more humble in introducing it to the difficulty of research; but they keep to direct observation, thus accentuating the already exaggerated tendency. What is the result on the intellectual and religious life of the individual? *The soul is as it were mutilated*; it is shut away from all mystery; it loses interest in and desire for higher values.

Thus interiorly divided and mutilated, the youth of both sexes, under often misleading appearances, are *lacking in strong personality*. It is not only in Germany or in Japan, under totalitarian régimes, that an excessive influence may be observed of either the party in power or the State on State schools. Doubtless, to speak generally, education did call for a new intervention on the part of the State. But the intervention went too far. In some countries, there was a weakness which lent itself to the dictation of those in power: in default of any interior cohesion, education underwent an external unification by the State. The situation does not seem on the point of changing in Japan, nor, perhaps, elsewhere.

From the communications we have received, such has been the logical evolution of the schools system, of which the earlier promoters were imperfectly conscious; some at least would heartily condemn the lengths to which it has gone today. External circumstances have also intervened, either to put the development beyond what was intended, or even to divert it. Indeed, although the State school exerts an influence on youth in a particular direction, the reason often is that it is itself under the influence of an environment.

IV. THE NEUTRAL STATE SCHOOL INFLUENCED BY THE MODERN ENVIRONMENT. — If we wish to avoid attributing to the State school the responsibility which it shares with other factors, and to discover the remedy for the widespread evil which is centred in it, we must take into account the pressure of modern conditions upon it. A short historical survey will be of help; it is even indispensable.

First of all, to deal with *the West*. In the XVIth century, European culture, doubly weakened, had not enough vigour in itself to absorb completely the new values. Decadent metaphysics could not counterbalance the infatuation for the earthly splendour of an enlarged world; a loss of equilibrium resulted with gains to materialism. On the other hand, the Church which needed reform, was torn by the Reformation at the very moment when a rediscovered pagan culture fascinated the élite. Modern laicisation began then.<sup>2</sup>

In public and private life, desire for peace was instrumental in persuading men not to favour one confession of faith; from undenominational religion sprang irreligion,<sup>3</sup> atheist humanism, anthropocentrism, rationalism, egoism. Through lack of energy, or for fear of mingling the sacred with the profane, Christians themselves allowed the gap between religion and life to be opened. Of the Christian humanism which arose out of the encounter between Christianity and greco-roman antiquity, there soon remained nothing in many places but a humanist superstructure devoid of religious foundation. This superstructure was in its turn assailed by the development of technology in a rationalist society. A superficial specialisation takes precedence of a thoroughly human culture, as does utilitarianism of contemplation. Thus interiorly divided, man loses the sense of that deep-seated urge to unify and guide his tendencies; he has only some notion of faculties juxtaposed one beside another. Meantime, an inhuman economy weighs upon whole peoples.

As to *overseas countries*, it happened — in any case in Japan — that Westerners found the processus of spiritual impoverishment and secularization already far advanced. Their intervention carried the evil to its paroxysm. The Western colonist came with his mind preoccupied, as in his home country, with commercial interests and material problems. His concern was solely of a material, self-interested nature. Colonisation — excellent in some respects — bears the marks of the interior crisis which Europe endured in the XIXth century. The Church, the best safeguard for the Christian values, contributed to the education of the young races.

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<sup>2</sup> Without doubt, the development of culture brought with it a greater differentiation between functions and drew a line of demarcation between what was profane and religious. But the independence of the laity on their own ground did not authorise them to dispense themselves from moral and religious standards, nor to hinder the freedom of religious life. It is of this abuse of secularization that we speak here.

<sup>3</sup> See the articles: "Mixed marriages", in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), pp. 425-492.

But, alas ! for reasons known to all, missionary work was obstructed by colonists. <sup>4</sup>

How, in Western Europe and overseas, is this influence of modern conditions shown upon the neutral schools, and, to some extent, upon all schools ?

First of all, by *the general conception of training*. Because of a too great distinction between intellect and will, instruction has been separated from education ; it has resulted in brain feeding. However, life itself knits together what has been arbitrarily separated ; but what guidance has been given to souls ?

What we said in the preceding paragraph about the *content* of education can now be explained. Religious problems are passed over in silence. Neutrality develops into a lay faith, even contrary to the designs of the legislator. Training becomes specialised : on the one hand, the community wants technicians ; on the other, the nationalist State wants to exalt its own particular characteristics.

On the *institutional* level, the influence is even more marked. Until the beginning of the XIXth century, most of the schools in the West were, not only denominational, but also run by the Churches. The growth of democracy led to a wider diffusion of learning, and the State was impelled to build schools : in some countries, denominational or co-denominational, in others, laicised or neutral. The Nation, an entity both one and diverse, was confounded with the State ; a man of many talents was considered simply and solely as a citizen. The State school then stood as the symbol and guarantee of unity ; it is par excellence the citizens' school. The State favoured its own schools, and less well-to-do parents were economically constrained in their choice of school for their children. Such a system is harmful to religious development and to the unity of the nation.

Hence, when we think of the children attending the neutral State schools, we cannot miss a problem which goes beyond that of the religious course and must be solved in the very first place. Indeed, religious formation requires some cultural pattern and a favourable background. Moreover, the union of citizens of the same nation, the deep lasting understanding between peoples, presupposes a certain community of mind. Our attention is therefore drawn to a problem of *culture*.

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<sup>4</sup> See the article in *Lumen Vitae* (III, 1948, pp. 453-478) : *The influence of the West on the colonies*.

V. THE STATE SCHOOL AND THE PROBLEM OF MODERN CULTURE. — According to Christopher Dawson, the great revolution effected by Christianity in the West was the move from a religion of instinct to the worship of a transcendent ideal which each person must pursue for himself, with help from above. Christianity inspired moral effort; it awakened and sustained an active will in the individual, capable of voluntary efforts blossoming into social works. This great historian shows us how Western Christian humanism succeeded: the creation of a man united to God, one in himself, united to other people by their common religion, united to the élite of other Christian nations by a common culture, both religious and secular.

In seeking a common culture, we can neither hope nor wish for a return to the past. On the one hand, religion depends on personal liberty; on the other, the greco-latin heritage, which should not be squandered, must not prevent the West from acquiring other human values; a fortiori, neither must it be imposed on other peoples.

On the other hand, the concept of the individual and of the community which Christianity introduced and made prevalent has now become a most precious possession of mankind. It is the basis of a culture which respects, grades and unifies all the faculties; which, reaching to the very essence of the human person, disposes him to union with God and to fraternal relations with all classes, other spiritual families and other peoples; finally, a culture which teaches him to profit by the lessons of the past and work towards a better future.

This is not an essentially religious view, but it is seen in a false light if it is divorced from its religious and Christian context.

If we were to make it supreme in all the realms of learning, we would preserve the most precious patrimony of the West and of "holy Russia,"<sup>5</sup> we would respond to the desires of the East,<sup>6</sup> of Africa,<sup>7</sup> of many modern unbelievers<sup>8</sup> and of a humanity now becoming conscious of its unity.

<sup>5</sup> See Nicolas ARSÉNIEV, *Russian Piety*, in *Lumen Vitae*, I (1946), n° 3, pp. 412-434.

<sup>6</sup> See Fr. JOHANNIS, *Stepping-stones Towards Christianity in Indian Philosophy*, *ibid.*, I (1946), n° 1, pp. 173-197. — Also, Olivier LACOMBE, *Christian Wisdom and Oriental Wisdoms*, *ibid.*, IV (1949), n° 4, pp. 695-703.

<sup>7</sup> See Joseph VAN WING, *Christian Humanism in Africa*, *ibid.*, IV (1949), n° 1, pp. 25-39.

<sup>8</sup> See Georges HAHN, *The Spiritual Coldness of Modern Thinkers*, *ibid.*, III (1948), n° 4, pp. 653-670.



One of the consolations arising from a reading of the accounts in this number is that there are signs that people are tired of a secularism that has proved a failure, that there are many efforts to arrive at some other philosophy of life, and that there is some interest in religion, if not an actual pledging oneself to religion. In France, many secularists are fed up with an untenable neutrality and a narrow dogmatism. In Great Britain, the élite are in concern about the university crisis no less than by the unbelief of so many children. In Germany, experience of nazy atheism has given cause for thought. In the United States, the relation between religion and the State school has been studied in numerous publications and discussed in famous cases in court. After a half century of secularization the Argentine and Bolivia have changed their policy. In Australia a campaign has been started for "Christian education in a Democratic community."<sup>9</sup> While sanctioning a neutrality quite understandable in the circumstances, the Indian constitution respects religious feelings. In Japan, the idol, the State, has collapsed and an élite, small indeed in number, understands that the spiritual vacuum must be filled in, but, this time, not by any deceptive realities. Some of the African peoples are protesting against the secularism of some of the colonials, either in the name of their native culture,<sup>10</sup> or under the impulse of their Christian conscience.

The battle has not yet been won. Secularism is not disarmed. Some are casting aside the whole of Western culture because of its obvious failings and looking for salvation from the oriental wisdoms. As for communistic materialism, it vigorously pursues its objective which it believes to be the happiness of mankind. It seeks to draw into its wake distraught people, such as the Japanese. It is served by inadequately thought-out school reforms.

Those who are no longer attracted by such mirages and who understand the value of Christian culture must be more united and get to know each other better. This coming together — requiring prudent and bold action — presupposes, on a high level, historical researches and a deep understanding of the minds of other people ; on a lower popular level, it demands more objectivity and tact.

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<sup>9</sup> See Social Justice Statement 1949, *Christian Education in a Democratic Community*, Carnegie (Victoria), Renown Press.

<sup>10</sup> See *above* the article by the Rev. Gérard MWEREKANDE. See also R. LECLERC, *Problèmes scolaires en Afrique Équatoriale Française*, in *Le bulletin des missions*, XXIII (1949), n° 3, pp. 156-167.

VI. THE TRANSMISSION OF A COMMON CULTURE BY EDUCATION. — It is the function of education to transmit culture and technical discoveries. The family, the school, youth associations, parish communities, each has a mission of instruction and education. Each one of them is a milieu ; the normal development of even a free human being requires an appropriate setting. A tradition is passed on through other means : press, cinema, theatre, radio... The ideal would be for all the educative factors and cultural media to collaborate in disseminating the essential culture we have described above. There exist defections and deviations ; the other educational circles must supplement, protect, correct.

At the moment we are here concerned only with the School. Experience has shown that it is harmful to separate instruction from education, at least in the primary and secondary grades. The school has to help the pupil to get his right bearings and take his place in life. It will carry out this task by putting before him what is best in national tradition and by contributing to the development of personality with proper harmony of the faculties.

The problem of the *content* of the teaching and the standards of education is most important. We are drawn to distinguish a *minimum of training* and an *education more in accordance with the requirements of the values put forward and of life*.

*The minimum of training.* — Those who consider the former neutrality to be both impracticable and harmful want the *fundamental problems* to be discussed and the chief solutions proposed by the great spiritual families to be put before the pupils.<sup>11</sup> Explanations of ancient and modern authors, the reading of Pascal or foreign writers of like calibre, will provide many occasions for this treatment. Considering the place occupied by *religion* in general culture, many think that it cannot be ignored. It should be treated in a dynamic manner, so that the part which it plays in personal, social and cultural life is made clear... This will act as a stimulus, though not going beyond what Americans call “*learning about*” things. It will lead to further action on the part of the individual.<sup>12</sup> Those who favour this way of approach have in mind the influence of the Christian religion on the evolution of Western culture. But

<sup>11</sup> This information will contribute to broaden the minds of the élite. It must be given with care, or it will only add to the confusion and scepticism of the young.

<sup>12</sup> On the teacher greatly depends the effect of the general view-point. A sceptical and unbelieving master, instead of favouring the engagement, will keep his pupils in a critical study.

there is nothing to hinder the same method from being used in connection with Oriental or African cultures. These, also, owe much to religion. However, the Christian must realise that all religious aspirations find their explanation and fulfilment in the revelation of Christ, and in it only are preserved from deviations.

Lastly, if secular instruction is to be animated with this spirit, it is still more necessary that time should be given for acquiring religious culture strictly so called. Let us hope this will soon be understood in Japan, and also in other countries.

*Training more in accordance with values put forward and with life.* — Christianity is a complete vision of reality and a dynamic force which must inform the whole life. The training, which I should call normal for the Christian, requires that religious and secular teaching should be closely linked, that the study of religion and religious experience should go hand in hand, so that “*learning about*” becomes “*learning by experience*.” Blondel and the existentialists have stressed the difference between knowledge which precedes and that which follows upon action. Faith may not be indispensable in order to appreciate the fineness of Christian culture, but it puts it in a new light and gives strength to devote oneself to that culture.

This is why the *denominational* school, whether public or not, is the “normal” one for the Christian. It is so, less by reason of its institutional character than because of the Christian *spirit* which animates, or should animate, the instruction given.

In such a school, the study of profane subjects *prepares* and *prolongs* the religious teaching. It prepares it by developing dispositions favourable to the religious way of life, by raising a problem, discerning some call... It prolongs it by presenting types or works which embody the Christian ideal, demonstrating how history confirms Christianity. Courses in literature, history, geography, science, can all contribute much to Christian training.<sup>13</sup>

This education, if it avoids narrowness and keeps clear of deviations, makes a man truly humanist, and prepares him for an understanding of other social classes, other countries, other spiritual families.<sup>14</sup> It lays the foundations for a true community of persons.

<sup>13</sup> See, for courses in literature and history, the article by the Rev. Charles MOELLER, *supra*; for science courses: Georges BENÉ, *Scientism and Modern Science. Their Pedagogical Consequences*, *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n° 1, pp. 102-116.

<sup>14</sup> See Sister M. ROSALIA, M. H. S. H., *Teaching Religion as a Bond of World Unity*, in *Lumen Vitae*, II (1947), n° 2, pp. 265-281.

If the *institution* is of less importance than the spirit, it nevertheless exercises an influence which sociological progress leads us to appreciate more. In this connection we can perceive a change taking place in several countries, notably France, the United States, Germany... People are hoping that the State will loosen its grip and the School may be more attached to the nation, that is to say to the cultural milieu. If, it is argued, the nation possesses several large spiritual families, the schools system should be diversified and thus be more closely in touch with the realities of life, without ever sacrificing the great truths which they hold in common and without minimising the rôle of the State, which is the guardian of the common weal.

From this standpoint, the schools legislation of Holland has attracted attention of other countries: the State primary schools are neutral, but the same subsidies are allowed to the private schools, especially those of the Catholic and Reformed Churches...<sup>15</sup> Circumstances, such as economic reasons, may prevent a like arrangement being made in other countries. In such a case, the possibilities must be considered and immediate benefits which are compatible with the common good distinguished from ultimate objectives. Besides, legislation is not the only important factor; very often much depends on the spirit with which it is applied.

The denominational school which is faithful to its mission, is the source of the Christian culture which has shaped Western thought, and can lead the East and Africa towards a new humanism.

VII. THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF THE PUPILS IN STATE SCHOOLS.— Here we have the most difficult case, that of the neutral schools. The suggestions put forward in this number may also be useful to teachers in the denominational schools, whether official or private.

Two preliminary observations will set us on our way. On the one hand, the pupils of the neutral schools come mainly from families who are careless about early religious instruction. On the other hand, if the school milieu provides a wider field of information, the teaching may run the risk of dividing the pupils' mind and of shackling the free exercise of certain tendencies. We have therefore the following suggestions for the *religious message* to be

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<sup>15</sup> See, in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), n° 2, pp. 340-376, the article by W. BLESS, S. J. and by J. W. DINJENS, *The Educational System and Religious Teaching in Holland*. This article may be obtained separately.



given and for the *methods* best to be adopted in its transmission.

Since faith is an engagement and an adherence to Revelation, it is particularly important that the engagement be emphasised, and that the content of Revelation be seen to be true and a synthesis of true values. More than any other, the pupil at the State school requires to be introduced to religion by a firm believer, a witness to Christ.

*Methods* are called for in every case, but in this they are indispensable. It is necessary to *start from life* and *continue in a way which is both live and synthetic*, and *finish with life*.

*Start from life* : that is, to take into account the hidden desires of men and the supernatural tendency of those who are baptised and confirmed.<sup>16</sup> It is to start from awakened interest or to arouse it. From this point of view, the pupil at the neutral school is both more and less advantageously placed. He has his attention drawn to various problems by his surroundings ; but, on the other hand, his religious sense, his inclination for religion, is often less developed.

*To continue in a living and synthetic way*, that is a comprehensive programme. It means :

To put religious knowledge in its relationship to secular ; to put sacred history in its context ; to make the older ones aware of the necessity for living their future life in a Christian way...

To further both religious understanding and experience, and to this end, to encourage discreetly the performing of religious duties...

To show doctrine translated into practice ; and to do this, frequent recourse must be had to sacred and Church history.

This process cannot be carried out if the pupil does not participate *actively* in his training. Passivity is more damaging here than anywhere. Their environment — we are told over and over again — tends to disassociate religion from everyday life. It is only an active assimilation which can avoid this danger ; and it alone can predispose the pupil, who has learnt to study for himself, finally to strengthen his religious culture.

*Finish with life*. By showing Christianity as lived by the saints and, in many points, confirmed by history, the teacher has already done much to train his pupil in living and spreading Christianity. The young Christian must now live his life of faith, of submission to God's Will, of apostolate. They will be helped in this if there is

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<sup>16</sup> We may refer the reader to what we have already written on this subject in *Lumen Vitae*, IV (1949), p. 229.

collaboration between the religious teacher, the family, the parish, child and youth movements.

*How should this religious initiation be carried out?* — It will be more like a study circle than a lesson. Several interesting illustrations of it have been given us in this number : study circles as such, week-ends, weeks for religious training.

The witnesses we quote (and to whom many others could be added) convince us that it is an advantage to give a certain amount of religious instruction *at the school itself*. If, as is supposed, it is of sound quality, it helps to give a happy healthy atmosphere to the school ; and it is often an opportunity for the teaching staff to escape from the bonds of a narrow "neutrality." Above all, children and adolescents are reached in this way whose parents would never send them to the parochial school for instruction. The pernicious effects of neutrality are destroyed and the young Christians find that the priest does not keep to his sacristy ; and better relations are brought about between families and priests. <sup>17</sup>

VIII. THE NUMBER, CHOICE, TRAINING AND COLLABORATION OF THE STAFF. — We put before the reader for consideration some points of general interest and of major importance.

1) The *number* of teachers who devote themselves to the training of pupils in the State schools is wellknown to be quite insufficient in many countries, especially in those where there is a dearth of priests. The collaboration of lay teachers is seen to be increasingly necessary. Many are in hopes that in future more scope may be allowed by the bishops for the teaching of the schools population in State institutions and greater numbers of masters, directors of study circles and chaplains be allocated for the task.

2) Some of our judicious and well-informed correspondents think that the *choice* of catechists, teachers and chaplains is not made with sufficient care, having regard to the particular difficulties attendant upon the religious teaching of children and adolescents in this special environment.

3) *The training*, both doctrinal and pedagogical, is noteworthy in the case of some teachers. But many are not sufficiently aware of the religious message which they have to transmit. Professor Nosengo, who is himself so competent and full of zeal, pleads elo-

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<sup>17</sup> These advantages carry the day, in our opinion, against those who prefer religious instruction to be isolated from secular to a certain extent. But religious training must be carried on outside the school as well.

quently for psychological and pedagogical progress. Greater efficiency can only be attained by means of greater knowledge of religious psychology and methods tested by experience.

4) In conclusion, it is clear that education involves *collaboration*. Each must carry out his mission. But in our imperfect world each must be ready to exercise the part of an assistant to a greater extent.

#### IX. THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM NEEDS WIDE COLLABORATION.

— The problem of religious teaching and, in particular, the Christian training of the pupils in State schools, which are neutral in their attitude, is today one of the great problems both on the human and religious side. It is doubly *human* : a non-religious personality is mutilated, and also the growth in several countries of the youth in two camps, one religious, one secularised, does not presage a united national community. *Religious*, it obviously is because neutrality in schools has withered the faith of many of the baptised and contributes to the apostasy of the masses. Under these various aspects, the problem, with such complex data, involves both the State and private schools.

Now that humanity has had some experience of secularism, many are turning away from it, as a desire for unity grows in the world. Who better than the disciple of Christ should rejoice over this tendency, even if its objective is not at a very high level and if there are illusions as to the way to attain to it ?

Whether we consider the human or the religious aspect of the problem, an adequate solution must comprise two matters : an *educative action* for the training of the person, and *institutional action* to create the favourable atmosphere. The first will convey to all certain goods belonging to the national culture and will help the spiritual families which are anxious to transmit a very precious heritage to their members and to the whole community. As for the second, it will encourage the creation of a cultural milieu where all are in sympathy without prejudice to the inner harmony of each individual and to the development of each spiritual family. At a time when the discovery of atomic energy calls for a strengthening of the soul, humanity cannot afford to impoverish itself spiritually, for the sake of a superficial uniformity. Even more than in the days of Washington, which Fr. Rooney recalls to us, it needs religion ; it has need of strong personalities. The emphasis must be laid on individual training and we cannot wait until the betterment of the surroundings calls a halt to the effort which is abnormal from certain points of view. This betterment is unrealisable without



strong personalities, and can only be achieved by degrees. It will be the work of wide collaboration. Those who would lead humanity back to the realm of instinct are excluded. Their attitude to UNESCO, as Professor De Visscher has told us, is symptomatic. The danger for others — parents, teachers, religious guides, jurists — is that they do not realise each their own responsibility and await a ready-made solution from the State or some other body. Whoever wishes to hasten the true solution, must repeat to themselves the title of Fr. James Keller's fine book — *You can change the world* and act accordingly. In an undertaking of such vastness, no collaboration of an open mind and a generous heart can be called small.



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† L. SUENENS, *Vic. gen.*

